

LIVES AND
MISSIONARY WORK
of
Rev. Cephas Bennett
and
Stella Kneeland Bennett

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STELLA KNEELAND BENNETT.





A SKETCH
OF THE
LIVES AND MISSIONARY WORK

OF

REV. CEPHAS BENNETT

AND HIS WIFE

STELLA KNEELAND BENNETT

1829-1891

BY

RUTH WHITAKER RANNEY

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THIS MEMORIAL OF MY GRANDPARENTS
I AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATE

TO

Mrs. Stebens, Mr. Brayton, and Dr. Cross

THE SURVIVING PIONEER MISSIONARIES
OF BURMA

WHO WERE LONG AND INTIMATELY
ASSOCIATED WITH THEM
IN MISSION WORK

NOTE.

THE conviction that the Master could be served, and interest in the cause of missions be increased, by the telling of my grandparents' life-story, has led to the publication of this brief sketch. The scarcity of material, due to the fact that my grandmother had destroyed all her letters and journals, has made the preparation of a more accurate and extended memorial impossible.

I wish to thank all who have in any way assisted me in this labor of love, especially Miss H. Phinney, a fellow-missionary, without whose aid I should hardly have undertaken it.

Should I receive any profits from the sale of this book, they will be devoted to the support of Burmese preachers, thus aiding the work in which my grandparents took a life-long interest.

RUTH WHITAKER RANNEY.

CHICAGO, *July 15, 1892.*

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INTRODUCTION.

A SANCTIFIED life always awakens peculiar interest in those who study it. "Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," and a like denial of self on the part of his followers makes them Christ-like. To live the Christ-life before the world is the highest honor bestowed on man. "The heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."

These nations need not so much men, money, and books, as sanctified lives. No cunning of logic will convince them; though slain seven times they will rise each time to the old life of unbelief. In their casuistry they can find an answer to every argument save that of the Christ-life lived before their eyes.

"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," said our blessed Lord; and as he is reincarnated in the lives of his children, so he draws and will draw till the end come. "I live, yet not I," says Paul, "but Christ liveth in me." It was the Christ-life in Paul that gave him his power over the nations.

Such a life we have set forth in the little volume before us. For many years the lives of these saints shone in the darkness of Burma. The perusal of this

book brings back most vividly the years of sweet fellowship enjoyed with these children of God. One cannot read it without seeing very clearly the hand of God leading and using his willing children all the way from the beginning to the close of their pilgrimage.

Both had high ideals of life. Mr. Bennett was a master of the art of printing, resourceful, and always able to meet an emergency ; such a man as was indispensable in the early days of our mission history in Burma. Who can tell how much his peculiar talents have contributed to the success of our missions there ? God raised up Judson, Mason, Brayton, and Cushing to translate the Bible into the four great languages of the country, but he also sent the Bennetts to put those translations into a permanent form for the millions of that land.

Mr. Bennett had large conceptions of the power and scope of the printing press, and in his hands it was not a mere machine, but a means to a great end. Nor was his usefulness limited to this sphere ; he was the equal of many of his associates in direct spiritual labors for the people among whom he lived. Ordained to the gospel ministry early in his missionary life, and speaking the Burmese language well, he exercised large influence in his public ministrations. Superintending Sunday schools, both in English and Burmese, for years, he left the impress of his teaching on many lives. In this and in all work his enthusiasm was contagious, the enervating climate seeming unable to destroy it. Another marked characteristic of Mr. Bennett was his cheery hopefulness : how many disheartened missionaries have been

encouraged in their work by some wise or witty saying from his lips.

It is difficult, however, to speak of the life of Mr. Bennett apart from that of his faithful companion, so closely did their lives intertwine, and so well did they supplement each other. Their work was one. Mrs. Bennett was the steady, strong support of her husband through all the years of their married life; his wise counselor and helper in every undertaking. Her character shone forth most Christ-like in her spiritual ministrations, which were incessant. She had peculiar insight into the difficulties which fell to the lot of her fellow-missionaries and had the wonderful faculty of illuminating any subject brought to her for counsel. Having lived in three centers of mission work, Tavoy, Moulmein, and Rangoon, and made journeys also into Upper Burma, the natives from all over the country knew and loved Mama Bennett as they were accustomed to call her. Her house and heart were always open to them; and she obeyed literally Paul's injunction, "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (ready to sympathize, *rev. mar.*). Seldom have we met so sweet, so useful, so unselfish a life. Like her Lord she seemed always to be saying, "I came not to be ministered unto but to minister." Her virtues found their beautiful setting in her natural modesty.

When this book is begun, few will be able to lay it aside till finished. Its author has been swallowed up in her delightful service, and this is the secret of successful writing. We bespeak for it a wide reading. The

aroma of these lives will pass upon others, and no one can study them without being better.

As the days of Mrs. Bennett's life lengthened beyond her fourscore years, she earnestly longed to reach her home and be with Jesus.

“As when the weary traveler gains
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His heart revives if, 'cross the plain,
He sees his home, though distant still.
While he surveys the much-loved spot,
He slights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot
Because his journey's end is seen.”

Let all christians who read this simple record join in the prayer of the writer that the young people in our churches may be stimulated by it to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; that missionary interest may be quickened, and the desire of our Lord's heart for the evangelization of the world speedily realized, so that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

A. BUNKER.

PROVIDENCE, June, 1892.

A MISSIONARY SKETCH

OF

MR. AND MRS. BENNETT.

CHAPTER I.

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

*"In a service which Thy will appoints,
There are no bonds for me ;
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty."*

RARELY in the history of missions have a husband and wife been permitted to serve together in a heathen land for more than fifty-five years ; and it seems fitting, therefore, that some memorial should be preserved of Rev. Cephas Bennett and his wife, Stella Kneeland, to whom was accorded this privilege, and whose united terms of service for the races of Burma reached a hundred and sixteen years.

Cephas Bennett was born in Homer, Cortland County, N. Y., March 20, 1804. His father was the Rev. Alfred Bennett, an eloquent and effective preacher, the latter part of whose life was spent in spreading information, and kindling a missionary spirit, among the Baptists in the West and South. At the age of

four the little Cephas, then on a journey with his parents to Connecticut, met with a fall, the effects of which he carried through life. Traveling in those days was not so easy as now; and during the week which elapsed after the accident, before the comforts of home were again enjoyed, the injured knee grew worse, and it was the decision of the attending physicians that amputation alone could save the child's life. "Let my child die with both limbs, rather than halt through life with one," was the emphatic decision of the mother, for which the soul of her son blessed her for more than three-score years and ten. His boyhood, however, was doomed to the use of a crutch, but in his eleventh year his father took him to a distant physician, who had gained some repute in such cases. After examining him the doctor said, "My boy, I advise you to throw away that crutch." It seemed like parting with his best friend; and he was not prepared to act at once on this advice. But on their journey home, when stopping at an inn for dinner, the crutch was set up by the fireplace, and, in the excitement and bustle of leaving, was forgotten, "and stands there yet, for all I know," Mr. Bennett used to say in recounting the circumstance. From that day he dispensed with the crutch, and walked with the aid of a cane only.

At the age of thirteen he was apprenticed to a printer, with the privilege of attending school three months each winter. Seven years later, having mastered his trade, he was engaged to superintend the publication of the *New York Baptist Register* in Utica,

a paper which was afterward merged in *The Examiner*. Writing to his parents on his twenty-first birthday, he refers to his conversion, five years before, his interest in the Sunday school, where he had taken a class, and his desire that, although he had become of age, they should continue to exercise the same watch-care over him as formerly. In the succeeding year his marriage took place.

Stella Kneeland, who was destined to be throughout a long life Cephas Bennett's faithful and efficient helpmeet, was born January 13, 1808, in Thorn Hill, town of Marcellus, Onondaga Co., N.Y., being the eldest of twelve children born to Amasa and Charlotte Kneeland. Her father was quite distinguished as a teacher, well-read, and possessing a remarkably good memory. The mother was a woman of unusual wisdom and strength of mind. In any controversy in the neighborhood her decision was given in a way so terse, so wise, so discriminating, that it was generally satisfactory and accepted as final. Of their eleven children who lived to maturity, all were at some time engaged in teaching, and were noted for ready wit and scholarly attainments.

Stella began her education at the district school the summer after she was three years old, and finished her school life at the then somewhat famous Cortland Academy, Homer, N.Y. She displayed great aptness for learning; and it was due to her own persistence and thoroughness, rather than to any advantages at her command, that she became an accurate and accomplished scholar. When spinning with the big wheel,

or busy about other household duties, her book was always beside her, that not a moment should be lost.

She was exceedingly fond of children, and, as the eldest in a large family, was from an early age the careful, painstaking little house-mother, greatly beloved and honored by her brothers and sisters. Dr. Jonathan Kneeland, a cousin and companion in childhood, says of her: "My first distinct recollection of her dates back to the death of my mother, as she committed my sister and me to the care of Aunt Charlotte and her daughter Stella, then ten years old. When the children of our families got tangled in their plays and lost their tempers, Stella would make peace, and settle all childish differences. Her beautiful face, large, dark eyes, and musical, persuasive voice made an end of all strife wherever she went. Her father was wont to say, 'When Stella left home the younger children in our flock met a loss which can never be made up.' She was the best model to shape the manners and morals of a family of children after that I have ever known."

Her interest in missions dated from the sailing of Dr. Judson and his companions when she was four years old; the subsequent return of Mr. Rice, and his visit to the church of which her parents were members, when the country-side was roused to great enthusiasm, also made a deep impression upon her, and was often alluded to in later years.

She was converted, when about twelve years of age, in a series of Methodist revival meetings, held in the schoolhouse; but fearing to take such solemn vows upon herself, she did not for some years unite with the

church. When, however, she received a proposal of marriage, she felt she must publicly acknowledge her hope in Christ before taking any other step which would affect her whole after life. She was baptized by the Rev. Jesse B. Worden.

The marriage of Cephas Bennett and Stella Kneeland took place in Thorn Hill, January 10, 1826, the young couple going to make their home in Utica, where Mr. Bennett's business was now well established. A bookstore was added to his publishing house, and life was opening before him with every prospect of success. But his mind was not at rest. The father's profound interest in missions had not failed to make its impress on the son, and to arouse in him a desire to aid in the cause. His lameness might well have excused him from personally engaging in the enterprise, but an excuse was the last thing he wanted. In 1827 he conceived the idea of printing the Burmese Bible in America, and wrote to Dr. Davies of Philadelphia, explaining his project, and offering his services should the scheme be deemed feasible. Dr. Davies communicated the proposition to Dr. Bolles, the Secretary of the Triennial Convention in Boston, and the result was a visit by Dr. Bolles to Mr. Bennett at Utica. The plan of printing the Burmese Bible in America was rejected as impracticable; but he was urged to offer himself to the Convention, to go out to Burma as mission printer. After a long consultation Mr. Bennett said, "Let us go up and see what my wife thinks about it." They did so; and in speaking of this interview in after years, Mrs. Bennett often remarked that as soon as they

entered the room she felt sure the outcome of the visit would be that she and her husband would go to Burma. And so it proved ; for the decision to follow Dr. Bolles' advice was ere long reached, an opportunity for greater usefulness in the Master's cause, though accompanied with much of self-sacrifice, being more attractive to them than the prospect of a life of ease and comfort at home.

Mrs. Bennett was not one to shrink from any duty, though it signified, as in this case, the separation from all friends, without the hope of reunion, and with only the possibility of very uncertain and infrequent communication. It must be remembered also that at this time the cruel persecutions of Messrs. Judson, Hough, and Price by the Burman king were fresh in the minds of all, and that privations and sufferings of every kind were known to await those who followed in their footsteps. Up to this time there had gone out only the Boardmans and Wades, in addition to the missionaries just named. Her thought in leaving all the comforts of her home and the companionship of Christian friends, as well as of the large family circle, was not that she could personally accomplish much for the heathen, but that as a faithful wife, by providing her husband with such home comforts as she could command, she might enable him the more successfully to fulfill his mission. This humble estimate of her powers but illustrates the unaffected humility which through life was a prominent trait of her character.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennett had not only themselves to consider in making the decision to go, but also the

welfare of their infant daughter, Elsinä Stella, born in Utica, April 29, 1828, and hence only about a year old at the time of departure.

No record of this important event of their lives remains except the following, found in the Report of the Board of Managers, dated April 19, 1829: "While directions were sent abroad (to carry forward the translation of the Scriptures), corresponding measures were adopted at home, to provide a competent printer for so important a situation, and the means of successfully prosecuting the design. The Board trust they have been directed to one whose heart the Lord has inclined to take this service upon himself. Being made acquainted with the disposition of Mr. Bennett, of Utica, early in November, they had personal interview with him, and on the eleventh, by solemn resolutions, accepted him and Mrs. Bennett as their missionaries. This interesting family relinquish a favored situation and prosperous business, making an unreserved consecration of themselves and property to the cause of the heathen, and anticipating no other temporal reward than the satisfaction of being useful to them. They are expected to leave this country by an early ship, for the field of their labors."

On the eve of their departure a farewell meeting was held which is thus described: "At the last meeting before the Convention separated, Cephas Bennett, whom the Board had appointed a printer to the Burman Mission, was, with his wife, set apart by prayer and by other services. The scene was deeply affecting. Mr. Bennett gave a brief and modest statement of his con-

version, and of his views and feelings in relation to the Burman Mission, ending with the words of the excellent and lamented Wheelock, 'To Burma would I go; in Burma would I live; in Burma would I toil; in Burma would I die; and in Burma would I be buried.' The father and mother of Mr. Bennett were present, and it touched every heart to see these venerable parents, about to take leave forever of their son and his wife and child. The father, in a prayer in which the overflowings of a strong natural affection and submissive faith in God were strongly blended, commended his children to the protection of his Father and their Father, of his God and their God. It was a scene long to be remembered, and it gave a sweet and most appropriate finish to the sessions of the Convention. The savor of these services will, it is hoped, long remain in the hearts of the members."

On May 19, 1829, the last farewells were said, and Mr. and Mrs. Bennett and child sailed from Philadelphia in the brig Mary, bound for Calcutta. The voyage was made with but one serious storm, although at times the tossing and rolling of the ship continued for days together, making rest or occupation impossible; at other times a prolonged calm would hinder the progress of the ship, and weary them with its monotony. The captain proved to be an avowed infidel, who disliked missions and missionaries, and took no pains to lessen the hardships of the voyage. Among the dozen passengers only one christian was found, Mr. Blaikie, the supercargo, who proved a friend indeed. Drinking, gambling, loud talking, and laughter

were indulged in by the other passengers throughout the day, and often far into the night. The seamen were objects of much interest and many prayers, but efforts by the missionaries on their behalf were not productive of direct results.

The serious illness of the baby, caused by lack of proper food (codfish, salt beef, and pork forming the staple diet, and neither bread nor milk to be had), with Mrs. Bennett's delicate health, their uncongenial companions, the separation from home and friends, coupled with a strong sense of unfitness for the work in the strange and untried life before them, all combined to make this a time of heart-searching, leading to much prayer and study of the Word.

On July 30, the Cape of Good Hope was rounded, and for three days and nights they were at the mercy of a fearful storm; but weathering this, after two months more they arrived in Madras, September 8, and were received into the family of Mr. Van Someren, a christian gentleman, who entertained them for a week with cordial hospitality, and thus was begun a lifelong and intimate acquaintance.

Another month's sail brought them to Calcutta, but this proved to be the most tedious part of the journey, for Mrs. Bennett and the baby were ill, without proper medical attendance, and tormented almost beyond endurance by the swarms of mosquitoes from the sand ballast taken on at Madras. When the ship arrived at the mouth of the Hoogly River, preparations were made for getting them to town as soon as possible. Leaving the brig sixty miles down the stream, they

finished the journey in a small passenger boat, manned by natives. The bodily pain and mental anxiety endured at this time were greatly augmented, not only by the lack of ordinary comforts, but by the constant reminders that they were in a foreign land, surrounded by all the degradation of heathenism. Most distressing of these were the headless bodies, preyed upon by vultures, which were constantly to be seen floating down the river. In watching the little one, lest it should not survive the journey, unable to make much exertion herself in caring for it, the time passed wearily to the mother. But on their arrival in Calcutta, Mrs. Lawson, the wife of the former pastor of the Circular Road English Baptist Church, received Mrs. Bennett into her home, and secured for her the best of care; here on November 1, her second daughter, Mary, was born.

During this enforced stay in Calcutta, Mr. Bennett made the acquaintance of the venerable Dr. Carey, then in his sixty-ninth year; and they were shown no little kindness by the English missionaries, particularly by a Rev. Mr. Yates, who had formerly visited Utica, and who was engaged in mission work in the city. Their stay was further made memorable by a notable event, the abolition of suttee by the English Government.

Mr. Bennett was not without employment while waiting for a ship to take them to Moulmein; for as Mr. and Mrs. Penny of the English Baptist Mission needed to go away for a change, Mr. Bennett took charge of his boys' school for six weeks, which school

he thus describes :¹ "Mr. Penny is the principal of the benevolent institution ; the number of pupils averages one hundred and forty, and as the school is taught on the Lancasterian plan, I can manage very well. It is such a motley crowd you would be surprised to see it. There are native Bengalis, Malays, Chinese, boys from Greece, Persia, and from almost every nation in India, and there is not, I believe, a perfectly white face in the school. All are children of indigent parents, here to prepare for various stations in life, and are thus kept from the mire and filth of ignorance." After a time a Burman teacher was secured, and to the five hours spent in the school were added two hours daily in the study of the language.

At length, on December 26, they embarked for Moulmein under favorable conditions, and arrived at Amherst, January 13, 1830, eight months from the date of sailing from America. At noon the following day they left the brig in company with the captain in a Burman boat, with two other boats carrying their goods, press, and paper, on their way to Moulmein, twenty-eight miles up the river. They arrived in the evening, and after a walk of a mile, reached the mission house, and were cordially welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Wade. They found the native Christians engaged in evening prayers with the missionaries, and so had the pleasure of uniting in worship with them at the very beginning of their new life.

¹ I am indebted to Dr. D. A. W. Smith's obituary notice of Mr. Bennett for many of the facts contained in this chapter.

CHAPTER II.

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

“Oh, blessed work for Jesus,
Oh, rest at Jesus' feet.
There toil seems pleasure,
My wants are treasure,
And pain for him is sweet.
Lord if I may,
I'll serve another day.”

THE Bennetts' first home in Burma was a frail structure, built on high posts, with floors of bamboo, walls of matting, and roof of thatch. Instead of windows, the upper half of the walls was made to swing upward and outward, and be held in place by a stick. During a heavy rain storm these must be dropped, and the work go on as best it could in the dark, or by a crude cocoanut-oil lamp. As there is almost constant rain for six months of the year, this was no small inconvenience. Not till they had been in the country ten years did they enjoy the luxury of a glass window, one for each family being then sent out from America.

The printing office was also of bamboo, a building fifteen feet by thirty, put up at the cost of about one hundred and five dollars. This was completed, and work begun in it, February 6, 1830; and in the following month Mr. Bennett printed the first edition of "The Golden Balance," a tract in Burmese by Dr.

Judson, which is still much used, and of which at least two hundred thousand copies have been printed. After a few months of the companionship of Dr. Judson and the Wades, the Bennetts were left alone in Moulmein, Mr. Bennett taking charge of a small English church of twelve members, and the native church of forty members. Mrs. Bennett took up the work among the Burman women, holding prayer meetings with them as well as she was able while the language was still so new to her. Much time was given to study of the language by means of the native books, written on palm leaves with a style, they being without the printed helps so useful to modern missionaries in acquiring the language. But so successful was she that a few years later, when Dr. Judson was ill, and began to fear that death was to end his work of translating the Bible into Burmese, he expressed a desire that Mrs. Bennett should complete the translation and revise his part, remarking at the time, "She has a better knowledge of the language than any of us now here."

All through the summer of 1830, Dr. Judson and the Wades were continually writing from Rangoon, telling of constant calls for tracts and asking for supplies. In November Mr. Bennett wrote to the corresponding secretary: "There have been printed more than seventy thousand tracts, about thirty-three thousand of which have been sent forth; the rest are not yet put up. The call is increasing, light is spreading. It may not be amiss to state that while formerly it was difficult to get the people to receive tracts, they now come and beg for them. Two more presses could be

advantageously used were they here. The Burmans are a reading people, and shall they not be supplied with the Word of God and religious tracts?" The call for new presses was responded to, and from March to December, 1832, two were kept employed, and from January to July, 1833, four were in constant use. The printing of the first edition of the New Testament in Burmese was completed in December, 1832.

In the fall of 1832, the Wades were obliged to return to America, on account of failing health, and as Mrs. Bennett was far from well and her fellow-laborers feared she might not have long to live, Dr. Judson strongly advised that this excellent opportunity of sending her children to relatives in America be improved. With a heroism born of devotion to her Lord and Master, the loving mother parted with her little four-and-a-half and three-years old daughters. The elder understood something of what was passing, but to the younger came no premonition of the loss they were about to sustain in the separation from those who loved them better than life. While Mrs. Bennett sat weeping in her room, after her husband had gone to take the children on board ship, Dr. Judson sent her the following note,¹—

"Sovereign love appoints the measure
And the number of our pains,
And is pleased when we take pleasure
In the trials He ordains.

"Infinite love, my dear sister, in the person of the Lord Jesus, is even now looking down upon you, and will smile if

¹ From Wayland's Memoir of Rev. Dr. Judson.

you offer him your bleeding, breaking heart. All created excellence and all ardor of affection proceed from him. He loves you far more than you love your children; and he loves them also when presented in the arms of faith, far more than you can conceive. Give them up, therefore, to his tender care. He will, I trust, restore them to you under greater advantages, and united to himself; and you who now sow in tears shall reap in joy. And on the bright plains of heaven they shall dwell in your arms forever, and you shall hear their celestial songs, sweetened and heightened by your present sacrifices and tears.

Yours,

A. JUDSON."

The parents, when they parted with their children, expected that they would find a home with their grandparents; but between the time of separating from them and their arrival in America, the grandfather, Rev. Alfred Bennett, had entered the service of the Convention (now the A. B. M. U.), as its senior agent, which office he held for twenty years, and the grandmother had gone to reside with a son in Utica. Notwithstanding this, the little ones found a warm welcome, and the grandmother went back to Homer, N.Y., where she had before lived, and again took up the cares of housekeeping and the bringing up of children.

In after years she found a home with one or the other of these granddaughters till her death at the advanced age of ninety-four.

In 1833, Dr. Judson's return to Moulmein left Rangoon without a missionary, and it was decided that the Bennetts should remove thither; this they accordingly

did, taking with them two native assistants, a Karen, Ko Tha Byu, and a Burman, MOUNG EN, who were destined to become prominent and efficient workers for their respective races. Of the year and a half spent there, the following partial account is from Mr. Bennett's journal:—

April 26, 1833. Ko Tha Byu, who came round with us in order to hunt up and search out and preach the Gospel to his countrymen, who are scattered in the wilderness about us, this morning took his staff in hand and, accompanied by a Burman disciple, departed leaving his wife and child with us. May the spirit and zeal of a Paul be with him, and abundant success attend his labors.

May 11. Gave one hundred and sixty tracts in my morning walk. To-day, the great festival called the Gneoungyathwoon Pwai took place. This festival is to pray for the health of the king, and the coolness and comfort of themselves. It is held by the king's order, and the young men and women have been practising for some days. Early this morning a large procession of military officers of government and gentry, with the peasantry, marched to the great Pagoda, where the ceremony of pouring the sacred, perfumed water was celebrated. After breakfast, I took one hundred and fifty tracts and went to the Pagoda,—they were all asked for and given.

May 12. Walked out this evening with Mrs. Bennett to see the new piece of ground, which I have fixed upon as the best I can find for a mission compound, and which I design soon to ask of the Woongee (viceroy), with permission to erect thereon a mission school-building. Ko Tha Byu came in this evening, having visited more than seven villages and given one hundred and fifty tracts.

June 29. For several days past there has been a great crowd in the veranda below, which has given Mounge En a good chance to preach the gospel. Some dispute, and as their objections are answered at once, it may serve to silence the cavilings which might arise in the minds of the bystanders. It is gratifying to see with what coolness and decision their violence and opposition is met by Mounge En. Though some use their utmost endeavors to excite his anger, yet I have never known him so far overcome as to give his adversaries the desired triumph.

July 3. The religion of the country is established by custom and law, and though all foreigners are permitted the full and free exercise of their own religion, yet not one Burman has ever been known to leave his religion and join either the Mussulmans, the Romanists, or the Armenians. And if they should, they would be persecuted in the same way as for becoming Christians. There is no such thing as religious toleration for the natives of the country. The disciples are in danger more or less every day. The present Woongee is a liberal sort of man, rather partial to foreigners, and he favors, to a certain extent, what I suppose he calls their errors or their follies; and this indifference of his keeps in check many of his under officers, who, I have reason to know, would take the life of a known disciple of Jesus, if the Woongee were of a sanguinary disposition. The difficulties which took place when the schools were broken up are a sufficient proof of this. The two teachers were fined and imprisoned, and beaten as much as they dared to, and the Woongee was wholly ignorant of the matter, or, at least, so I am given to understand. They entirely stripped the station of every vestige of apparatus, — paper, slates, blackboards, benches, etc. Thus the door has been closed against schools here. But as a long time has passed by, and it is

partly forgotten, I design at the close of the rains to open a school of some sort. Diligence and much patience are needed here; as an Armenian gentleman remarked to me a few days since of the Burmans, "They all need making over."

July 27. I learn from some of the natives who sometimes call on us, that our tracts have been taken by people who live here to Bassein, and there exchanged for fowls with the poor ignorant Karens. This is a new device of the adversary, and one in which I trust time will show that he has overreached himself; for the Karens, or, at least, many of them, can read Burmese, and why may we not hope and pray that those who have hitherto had no religion may find the truth, as it is in Jesus, through the means of these same tracts?

MR. BENNETT TO DR. JUDSON.

RANGOON, Oct. 28, 1833.

DEAR BROTHER JUDSON,—We are in distress and send to you for relief. For the last several days our house and the small house of Ko Tha Byu, ten cubits square, have been thronged. The Karens are coming to us from many places, men, women, and children, and all anxiously inquiring about the religion of Jesus. Several have requested baptism, and they are all anxious for schools, if some one will come and teach them, and offer to build zayats for preaching or for schools. There are very many who keep the Lord's day, read our tracts, and all get together in families, and sing and pray to the One who rules in heaven. The heads of families not only do this, but they teach their children. They declare they have left off drinking spirits, and, as far as they understand, endeavor to practise according to the Scriptures. Can you send us any assistance? If so, do, for Christ and his cause require it.

RANGOON, NOV. 11, 1833.

We have good reason to believe the work among the Karens is genuine, if opposition is a test. For the devil is mustering his forces. What the issue of the campaign will be I can not say; but those who were yesterday baptized said, if the Woongee should issue an order to cut off their heads, then let him cut them off; they believed in Jesus, and if they were killed, they should go to him and be happy. There were thirty present at worship yesterday morning, after which the four Karens were examined and received; afterwards Ko Thah-a accompanied them to the king's tank, and baptized them. About four o'clock the disciples assembled, and the Lord's supper was commemorated with twenty-two communicants.

December 11. I learn this evening that Ko Thah-a was called to-day by the South Raywoon (Deputy Governor); and as he was not at home, the men sent for him took his niece and confined her in the stocks. But as two of the disciples promised to deliver the pastor on the morrow, she was liberated.

December 12. The men, according to promise, accompanied Ko Thah-a to the Raywoon's court, where he was accused of being a teacher of the foreign religion, and that he had one or two disciples, which he denied, with many other accusations, some true, some false.

December 13. We learn nothing new to-day, only that a young man, who is one of the Woongee's guards, sends us word that it would not be well for the disciples to come to our house at present, as persons are appointed to seize all such and take them to the king's court.

December 15. Early this morning four more Karens from Maubee came in, some desiring baptism; but as they heard of Ko Thah-a's seizure, and of the order to seize all who

came here, they stayed but a few minutes. One of them who has been baptized said, "All this affair is but for a little time; it cannot prosper; for though for the present they may appear to suppress the new religion, yet ere long it will burst forth like fire smothered under straw."

January 6, 1834. For some time past there has been conversation and correspondence on the subject of my engaging in a free school, in Moulmein, partly supported by Government and partly by the Mission. Government has made an offer to partly support such a school, and I have no doubt would in a short time wholly defray all its expenses, or that the parents of some of the children, public aid, and private donations would fully meet all its expenses. I have been personally requested to commence such a school by Major Burney, the English Resident at Ava, when here on his way to the capital, and Mr. Maingy, the Commissioner or Governor of the Provinces, has made mention of me to Dr. Judson. It has for years been a favorite contemplated plan, and I think it is a great detriment to this mission that there are no schools of the kind connected with it.

February 10. Brother and Sister Webb arrived this morning, and have an extensive field before them. Ko Thah-a called this evening, and says he has heard that the semi-atheist teacher of Shwaydounge has been seized, and taken up to Ava in four pairs of irons, with thirty or forty of his disciples, merely because they will not worship the pagodas, nor support the priests. If this be true, it will probably affect our operations, but how or where time will decide.

February 25. Visited the Woongee with Brother Webb, to take my leave, as I expect to go on board to-morrow. I presented him with a globe I had made (though rather imperfect), the land laid over with gold-leaf, and the water black, lettered in Burmese characters. He seemed much pleased with the present.

They left Rangoon February 26, on board the Pheaton, and arrived at Moulmein on March 1. The Government school mentioned in the journal was organized, and from the early part of 1835 to the close of 1836 Mr. Bennett was engaged therein. The school numbered over one hundred pupils, who were representatives of twelve different races. Fourteen only were girls, and these with the thirty-five boarders were in the care of Mrs. Bennett.

From January to October, — when Mr. Osgood relieved him, — Mr. Bennett had charge also of the English Church, the congregation growing in that time from twenty-five to sixty-five, and seventeen being added by baptism. At the same time he had a Burmese Bible class and Sunday school of forty members, and carried on temperance meetings among the English soldiers, which resulted in many reformation. This was not without hindrance, however, and in consequence of an order from the brigadier, they were changed into meetings for prayer “that God would spread his cause throughout the world, and convert the drunkard, the temperate drinker, and the tippler.”

In October they had the pleasure of seeing baptized an old servant, Coochil, who had lived with them ever since their arrival, and who was formerly with Dr. and Mrs. Judson in Ava. He was a Bengalese and a Mohammedan, but had been converted by hearing Mounge En preaching to the Burmans on the veranda in Rangoon. He served them most faithfully for many years thereafter.

In the following month Mrs. Bennett was very seri-

ously ill for over three weeks with the measles, and their three children, William, Anna, and Ellen, with eight of the boarding pupils, were all prostrated at once with the same disease.

At the close of 1836 Mr. Bennett reports having distributed, during the year, between three and four thousand Burman, over two thousand English, and fourteen hundred temperance tracts, printed in Moulmein.

A letter, relating to this period, from the Rev. James Delany, of Whitewater, Wis., for many years an honored Baptist pastor in America, will be of interest, as showing the impression made by the Bennetts on those outside the mission circle. He writes, —

“For nearly four years I was more or less acquainted with about twenty American Baptist missionaries in Moulmein. The period commenced in February, 1831. I was an artilleryman in the service of the old East India Company. There I heard the gospel from Eugenio Kincaid, and was led out of darkness into marvelous light. Mr. and Mrs. Bennett belonged to that group of noble men and women. Mr. Bennett was a twofold worker; he printed and preached, with both type and tongue, the glad tidings, not only to blinded pagans, but to men of the British Isles, just as blind. How often did I call on him in search of light, and never failed to receive instruction from his vivid way of conveying truth. He preached a good deal to the English church, and did much to keep us alive and active. He could converse freely on the most solemn topics while busy setting type in that old printing office of sixty years ago. It was a double service. With Mrs. Bennett I was not so intimately acquainted, but I still have strong recollections of her. She appeared to me, and to others of stronger judgment, to be a true woman, a genuine friend and guide to other women, particularly the dupes and victims of heathenism and its degrading influences. Her intellect was fine and well cultivated; her thinking capacity and emotional nature were well balanced; in short, grace reigned through righteousness unto eternal life in that Christian heart.”

In the year 1836, Mrs. Bennett, besides caring for her own family and the boarding pupils, and engaging in other mission work, translated into Burmese Gallaudet's "Child's Book on the Soul," a volume of one hundred and sixty pages; this of itself being no small amount of work. She afterward translated the companion book on "Repentance." In February of this year Mr. Bennett writes to his parents, begging that letters be sent them regularly regarding the welfare of their two little daughters in America, as for some reason, lack of promptness in writing, or failure in the mails, they had heard directly from their children but twice in two years. In addressing a letter to Elsinä and Mary, with much other good advice, he writes, —

"I want to say, and don't want you to forget it, your school books will do you more good in your *heads* than in your *hands*, therefore be studious, be industrious; learn to work as well as read, and then when you are at work you can think about what you have learned. It is better to think much than to talk much."

And he further urges the little ones to begin to keep journals and send them to him as soon as possible. In these years letters were received from America but once in six months, and were prized accordingly.

July of this year was a month long to be remembered in the Bennett household, for the three children were all ill with the small-pox, contracted from the natives; and the watching and attendance upon the sick, in addition to the care of a large school and daily teaching, was a severe strain upon the mind and body of both parents. But they were soon to be relieved of the school. In October, Sir Edwin Ryan, chairman

of the school committee, and Mr. Cameron, a member of the committee, objected strongly to the Sunday-school cards on the school walls, and to the religious instruction given the pupils, though it was always given out of school hours. The baptism of a Chinese pupil brought matters to a crisis, and the commissioner requested Mr. Bennett to resign, which he did, dismissing the school November 11.

Being now at liberty, he made two rather extended jungle trips, the second in company with his family. On his return a letter was received from Calcutta, begging him not to resign, and saying he had given the fullest satisfaction. But it was too late; instead, he accepted the invitation of Messrs. Wade & Mason to come to Tavoy and take charge of the Karen Press, about to be established there. The removal was soon made, and the work of the press taken up, engaging all of Mr. Bennett's time and strength through the week. Mrs. Bennett found scope for her energies in taking the entire care of the girls in a boarding school of eighty pupils in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Wade; and with her husband was enabled to do something for the little Burman church on the Sabbath. Thus, in uneventful toil, something over two years passed by, when Mr. Bennett, having suffered for a year from liver complaint, it was decided that he must return to America. As Mrs. Bennett had also been seriously ill, the entire family left for a season the home now grown dear to them, Mr. Hancock of Mergui taking Mr. Bennett's place. A Chinese youth, Ah Vong by name, who had suffered persecution because of his attachment to the

truth, was taken with them to America, in the hope that he would be useful in exciting an interest in the mission.¹

They left Burma early in 1839, and had two weeks of rough tossing on the Bay of Bengal before they reached Calcutta. Here they remained three months, watching and waiting for a chance to embark on an American sailing ship. Many fruitless efforts were made to secure a passage, but it was more profitable to fill the few cabins with merchandise than with missionaries. Before they finally succeeded, Mr. Bennett had the misfortune to fall and break one kneepan, an accident which caused him intense suffering at the time, and from which he never fully recovered. Having at last embarked and got out to sea, they found that their vessel was quite unseaworthy, and they barely escaped shipwreck. By a merciful Providence they were preserved and permitted to land at Mauritius, where they were detained fifty-one days by the unloading, repairing, and reloading of the ship. Again they set sail, amid many discomforts and anxieties. They approached the stormy Atlantic coast in midwinter. The captain's destination had been Philadelphia, but as he tried to enter Delaware Bay he found many ships blocked in by ice, waiting for a passage up to the city. After a week's delay he turned his prow toward New York, which city was reached January 20, 1840. There the warm wel-

¹ Ah Vong proved of great service to Mr. Bennett in the press after their return to Burma. He married an earnest christian girl, and of their children, six sons and two daughters, three sons have been earnest, efficient helpers in the mission schools of Moulmein, Rangoon, and Mandalay. Both Ah Vong and his wife are still living.

come and cordial hospitality extended to the missionary family by the excellent Deacon William Colgate cheered and rested their hearts. After recruiting for a week the little party set off for Utica, their former home. There was then no railroad between New York and Albany, but the journey in winter was made upon the frozen river. Soon after their stage coach on runners had started the ice began to crack, and the horses were turned to the shore road. Then came on a snowstorm, and before they had reached the half-way house the horses gave out, and the passengers were obliged to walk the remaining mile and a half, carrying the children in their arms. A fresh start was made in the morning, and Albany reached; and from this city to Utica the journey was made by railroad. It had taken nine months from Tavoy to Utica, a trip now accomplished in less than two months.

CHAPTER III.

"All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go."

"When we can not see our way,
Let us trust and still obey;
He who bids us forward go
Can not fail the way to show.
Though it be the gloom of night,
Though we see no ray of light,
Since the Lord himself is there,
'Tis not meet that we should fear."

THE voyage greatly improved Mr. Bennett's health, and he at once began planning work to be accomplished during his stay in America, as is shown by the following, written to the secretary shortly after his arrival. He says, —

"I propose to execute, with the assistance of Ah Vong, a new font of Karen punches and matrices on a reduced scale from any type we now have, and, if the Board approve, also one for Burmese; for, after the Karen is completed, if both should be executed together, the Burmese will be rather more than half done, as the characters for Karen are nearly all like the Burmese. It is my desire to settle down with the Chinaman, in some silversmith or watchmaker's shop in Utica, and bend all our energies, with other aid we may need, until the work be done. I apprehend at least six months will be necessary. If done, it will save the Board several thousands of dollars in a few years in printing Karen books."

This plan was followed out, and the work successfully accomplished.

One event of their stay in the home land was the ordination of Mr. Bennett on January 27, 1841, by the Broad-street Church of Utica, where he had formerly been superintendent of the Sunday-school. In the succeeding months he was engaged in visiting churches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York. It was at this time that tidings of the death of Ko Tha Byu, the Karen apostle, reached America. Mr. Bennett, in a letter, referred to him as "the man who has been more honored of God, in being made an instrument of good to his nation, than any other one man. He was the first to go among his people at Tavoy and Rangoon, and was with me in the latter place when that glorious work of conversion began, which we hope will not cease till all Burma is converted."

The closing months of their stay were occupied in finding suitable homes for their children. The eldest two had been converted during a revival the previous year in Homer, and the parents were permitted to see them buried in baptism and received into the dear home church, a privilege often referred to and dwelt on by the devoted mother. Elsinä was taken into the family of Miss Sally Edmunds of Philadelphia, an eminent christian woman, devoted to the work of educating young ladies. Here she was educated and cared for as if she were a daughter. The son, William, was placed in the family of Mr. P. Gorton of New Woodstock, N.Y.; and the three little daughters, Anna, Ellen, and Sarah, were provided with a home by Mr. Bennett in Utica, in the care of a sister of Mrs. Bennett, Miss Persis Kneeland, who for two years faith-

fully performed her duties as foster-mother, when, stricken with consumption, she was obliged to return to her father's house, where she died after a short time.

Miss Cynthia Sheldon then took the little girls into her home, at the Utica Female Seminary, giving them love and care as if they had been her own children, while they were being educated at the seminary. After a time the youngest was adopted by a family with whom she lived till her marriage to Dr. James Grieve. The others remained, and in 1848, when the Misses Anable removed the seminary to Philadelphia, they, being included in the family, went with them, remaining till their education was finished and they were fitted for places of usefulness elsewhere.¹

After a year and nine months in America, time which had been very fully occupied with work that was to tell in Burma, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett sailed from Boston, September, 1841, arriving at Moulmein after a voyage of one hundred and thirteen days; and not till a year and two months had elapsed did they hear from the little ones left behind, the youngest four years of age, and the oldest but thirteen.

During this second passage to Burma, Mrs. Bennett translated Dr. Alcott's "The House I Live In," which is still a standard text-book in both mission and gov-

¹ The elder eventually became the wife of Dr. G. W. Burton, who was for several years a missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention in Shanghai, China; they now reside in Louisville, Ky. The younger joined her parents in Burma. The names of "Aunt Cynthia" Sheldon and the Misses Anable, even after the lapse of nearly half a century, are fragrant in the memories of very many who were under their influence and teaching, but are now scattered to all parts of the world.

ernment schools, four editions of nine thousand copies having been issued. After a short sojourn in Moulmein, spent in preparing material for work, they proceeded to Tavoy, their old home.

The following letter, written by Mr. Bennett from Tavoy in August, 1842, will be of interest in view of the establishment shortly thereafter of the Karen Theological Seminary, and its permanence and success, and also in view of the fact that English has come to be taught in nearly all of the mission schools. He says,—

“To all whose views of evangelical truth are expansive, and who look forward to permanency and the good of future generations, schools have ever seemed indispensable. Efforts heretofore have mainly been to teach the Scriptures, to the almost entire exclusion of all worldly science; and it is no doubt a fact, humiliating though it be, that if by some dispensation of Divine Providence all further means of instruction from foreign teachers should be cut off, instead of a progression of the truth, even among the Karens, there would be a retrogression. The common sciences of arithmetic and geography are almost entirely unknown. These must be taught, as well as many other branches, but there are no books in their language to speak of. Who is to prepare them? One says, ‘They must prepare their own books;’ but how are they to be qualified for this desirable labor? ‘Teach them English,’ says another. But neither the one nor the other can be done without much labor and much expense, and we candidly confess that after an experience of twelve years we do not see any other course. We want books especially illustrating the Scriptures, such as ecclesiastical history and sacred geography. We do not want our pupils to write in English; we want them to write in their own language the ideas they cull from the English. The course pursued in all the schools this mission has ever had, so far as I know, has been too much like that of the kyoungs (priests’ schools), where the children lie flat on the floor, the books opened under their mouths, and all studying as loud as their lungs will permit. If writing, the paper is often on a bamboo floor, and the writer lies down to it. This is the native nature, and as soon as they can read their own language they consider themselves educated. There are some members

of the mission who have ever been opposed to English ; but slow as it may be in coming, it will eventually be prosecuted, and that, too, with success : this is my deliberate judgment. I have written thus freely because I am in earnest, and warmly in favor of a Karen Seminary, and if I err, it is in the head and not in the heart. I do earnestly hope that something may be done that promises permanence."

July, 1843, was a notable month in Tavoy ; the judgments of God were abroad among the people ; an epidemic of fever followed one of cholera, and so great was the mortality that three hundred persons died in the space of a few days. Ordinarily the bodies of priests are embalmed, and kept for months, and then burned with great ceremony, and even a common person's body is kept for a number of days ; but when priests or people die of cholera they are immediately buried, and no funeral, mourning, or feast is made for them by the friends. The lack of these noisy demonstrations seemed to intensify the gloom which overshadowed the natives, and the missionaries as well. There were, however, some rays of light, for at this time several Burmans were baptized, among them a man and his wife, the former having been a bitter opposer, and having threatened to separate from his wife when she first attended church in his absence.

The Tavoy Missionary Society held its tenth anniversary at the close of the year 1843-1844, and reported six hundred rupees raised by the natives, and seven hundred given by friends in the regiment, to be used in mission work and schools.

Upon Mrs. Bennett's return from America, where were left her six children, feeling that she had given up all for the natives, she took them into her heart as

never before, and from that time to her death she counted nothing too difficult or disagreeable if she might be of service in leading them to the truth, or in winning them to a higher ideal of life. She fitted herself to read proof in both Burmese and Karen, and for years was the mainstay of the press in this department. The Karen dictionary and grammar were being published at this time; and from early morning to late at night she might be found busy with these or with some other of her varied work for the good of the people. During this period of labor in Tavoy, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were engaged in press and school duties through the rains only, and traveled extensively in the jungle in the dry season. If work in the press demanded personal supervision, Mrs. Bennett took charge in the absence of her husband.

In 1845, Mr. Ranney having come to the press, Mr. Bennett was in a measure relieved from the office, and with his wife devoted his time largely to Karen school work, he taking the boys, and Mrs. Bennett the girls. They were encouraged by having seventeen ask for baptism during the first year.

In November of this year, Mrs. Bennett having been ill for several months, the doctor advised her taking a trip to Mergui. The following is her account of her journey thither, written for her husband, who followed her later and returned with her to Tavoy. She left in the mission boat, which was about forty feet long and nine feet wide, with a small shelter of bamboo and leaves in the middle; it had no deck, no keel, and was Burman made. She took with her, her little son

Edward, born in Tavoy in 1842, a Burman girl, a cook and his boy, two goats, a kid, fowls, and seven men to row the boat. She commences her journal Nov. 7, 1845:—

MY DEAR HUSBAND, — Immediately after you left us yesterday, I set about preparing for the night and the voyage. I then intimated to Coochil that I would like some dinner, and at sunset we dined on a grilled fowl and a slice of bread, with such an appetite that I began to fear we had not provisions enough for the voyage. I lay down about eight o'clock, feeling as safe and quiet as ever in my life. After a time I began to doze, when the girl sprang up with a scream, "A centipede!" I got up as fast as I could, and, sure enough, there was a large one running at full speed the length of the mat where I had been lying, and toward Eddy. I had been making such thrusts as I could, but fearing for him, I caught him up, and the enemy escaped, much to my regret. The fright, the stir, and waking of Eddy, with the thought that the reptile might be upon us again before morning, unfitted me for sleep; however, to think of sitting up and watching till I reached Mergui was out of the question, so I comforted myself with the thought that my Omnipotent Father could protect me from centipedes here, as well as from other evils elsewhere, and soon I lay down again as easy as if nothing had happened. "Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

November 10. — We are under the lee of an unknown island, and, as the men say, "far out to sea;" none of the men have ever been here before. The wind rose soon after dark last evening, and we went dashing on all night, the

boat rolling, and the water pouring in over the sides. By this time the girl became so seasick and homesick she could not take care of herself; I gave myself up to taking care of Eddy the best I could. Sit up I could not, and I did not know how to speak. In the morning the men found that they were drifting out to sea, and must try to regain the cape we had passed the day before. They cast anchor, but it would not hold, so they sailed and rowed and wrought all day, and at sunset were a little below the cape; but the wind freshened, and forced them to make sail again for Mergui. We had a terrible night; the wind blowing a tempest, the girl crying and groaning most piteously from fright and seasickness, the men in great excitement, the boat drifting out to sea, no one knew where, and all unable to prevent it. The waves rushed over the sides, till all the bedding and everything not in the trunk or tied to the roof of the shelter was drenched. I spent the night trying to keep Eddy and the girl as quiet as I could, all the time holding on with all the strength of one arm to the timbers, to prevent being bruised by the rolling of the boat. I was not frightened, but worn out by seasickness and want of rest. At daylight the island near which we are now anchored was in sight, and the men decided to row along the coast and look for any opening or place of shelter from the wind. After great exertion, and, as I thought, danger, having found no opening on the east side, we sailed round the north end, and came to anchor about two P.M. in deep and comparatively quiet water within a stone's throw of the rocks. There is not a place on either shore where we could even gain the rocks should the boat strike, they are so smooth, so steep, so high. You may be sure I felt our situation to be critical.

November 11.—I stopped writing yesterday because my head ached so badly, and now resume in better spirits, as I

think there is hope of your some time reading what I write. Just before sunset the cable of our anchor parted, and we were within reach of the rocks with the bamboo poles, and darkness just upon us. Then there was such terror in the faces, such clamor on the tongues of the men, and such wailing from the poor girl, as you would not care to hear. The captain of the boat, though terrified nearly out of his wits, soon recovered enough to order the men to their oars, and set them to rowing again. Then Coochil came forward with his skill, and in an hour they had a very good Bengali anchor, which they cast out, and also one made of two large stones tied with a rope. The night proved pretty quiet, though there was little sleep. Just before daylight this morning both cables parted, and then there was a stir! The men rowed till daylight, when we were delighted to see a little opening in the rocks which looked like sand. We made for it, and found a nice beach a hundred and fifty feet long behind an opening in the rock one hundred feet wide.

November 12.—The entrance to the beach is over rock and sand, but with a full tide in our favor we rowed in safely, and the men set out at once in search of necessities for the voyage. They soon returned with timber for an anchor, large rattan for cables, fresh water, and firewood. Last night was quiet, and I slept a good deal. An east wind still blows, and the men think we may have to stay here several days. As I expected to be but eight days in going, I had only provision for that time, and we are nearly out. Thus I have given you a sketch of what has happened to the “outer man” since I left you. But the internal conflicts, the hopes and fears, the prayers, and the heart-searchings of the Spirit I cannot tell you; they are known only to God. On Sunday night I felt death almost as near and as certain as I did last April, but my sensations were of a different nature. Then

I could only feel after the Saviour in my feebleness ; but I found him. In my greatest weakness the thought that what "I now see as through a glass darkly," would in a few hours be revealed to my open vision in all the glorious splendor of heaven, sent a thrill of joy through my soul, that I did not lose for days, and even to this time there is beauty and force in that Scripture that I never saw before. Now though I do not feel that I should sink to hell, though I had a crushing sense of that being my desert, and although I felt the Saviour to be near, with all the power and all the pity he had when for his fearing disciples he said to the winds and the waves, "Be still," yet the ideas of the crushing boat, the confusion and terror and hopeless despair of those with me, my poor child, and, above all, the horrible suspense and uncertainty as to my fate, in which my dear husband must suffer, perhaps for life, seemed between me and death ; and I could not but consider it a difficult thing thus to die, from what it would have been to die in my bed, surrounded by the praying friends who ministered to my wants in April. Surely my heavenly Father has some special reason for bringing death so often before me. Oh, for wisdom to profit aright by these dispensations !

November 13. — About four this morning the men began rowing, and at daylight we reached the north end of the island ; and after all our rowing, sailing, and toiling, we had to put about for our little shelter again, and with a great deal of exertion reached it about ten A.M. After all I had heard from the men of our great distance from the proper course, judge of my surprise this morning when we found all the eastern coast in sight, and the men confessed they could see the cape. I knew there was water enough to drown many such boats as ours, and rocks enough to destroy the largest ships, but I could scarcely forbear laughing at the

fact of our being so near the Tavoy River. While we were out we saw a boat under sail, and after we had anchored we saw that they took in sail and rowed toward us. It was decided by some on board to be a Malay pirate-boat, and it was laughable to see the preparations for flight, and to hear the thousand suggestions as to what to do with me and the girl. At last the boat came near, and we learned she was a poor unfortunate like ourselves, driven about at sea for eight days. It seems the fears of the crew were mutual, and all had a hearty laugh when each told the other. This has been a holiday: we have had something to break the monotony and loneliness. I am exceedingly homesick, but think I shall go on to Mergui if I can. Poor Edward begs very hard and often "to be taken to the house."

They started again the next day, and, after many more dangers and considerable delay, finally reached their destination.

The following incidents are culled from journals written during jungle trips taken in the Tavoy district in the years 1846-48:—

One of the applicants for baptism, who lives at a distance, and whom we had not seen before, had a string around her wrist, and when asked what it is for, said it was the hair of her niece, and put around to cure cramp. When asked if it was connected with their old superstitions, she said nothing, but the disciples sitting by said it was for medicine. While they were talking she broke it off and threw it away.

Lord's Day.—Mrs. Bennett met the women in prayer meeting as usual, a large number being present. Addressed the assembly from 1 Cor. ii. 3: love to God and love to man. At one o'clock we met for a prayer meeting; after singing

and reading a portion of Scripture I remarked that the Holy Spirit was what we needed, and if there were any who desired the Spirit they might speak or pray. One after another followed till the meeting closed. Mrs. Bennett said on returning home that she had now seen what she had long desired to see, the native christians voluntarily express their minds and lead in prayer.

The Pwo Karen Prophet and many of his people were in at worship to-day, and all bowed in prayer; this people do not now oppose as they did formerly, nor ridicule the religion of the cross.

Nineteen were received for baptism, and several more applied; of this number eight are heads of families, five members of Tavoy boarding school, and seven formerly in Mrs. Wade's school. The case of one or two shows how God can work even where we have little expectation of conversions. Some time since, when the cholera raged in this place, a member of the church lost his wife, and his mind was so affected by it that he moved to a distance from any of the disciples, seeming determined to get away from all religious influences. Years rolled away, and it would seem he could not banish all thoughts of God from his mind, and latterly he has assembled all he could who live near him on the Sabbath, and one of his sons who learned to read in the Tavoy school reads the Scriptures, and the old man talks and prays. A woman and her daughter, who have now been received by the church, are of those whom we trust have thus been converted: they both passed a very good examination.

Sunday. — At eight o'clock this morning the people assembled in the chapel, and from there walked in procession, singing one of Zion's songs, to the place where prayer has often been made and where many have witnessed a good

profession, and where to-day twenty-two more converts were baptized on a profession of their faith in Christ. At ten o'clock we met in the chapel, some three hundred being present; and in the afternoon the Lord's Supper was celebrated with two hundred communicants, the largest number I have ever seen.

Matah. — Mrs. Wade had appointed a church clerk, and a book was provided in which to keep the names of delinquents. From this book at the end of a year we find ten charged with drunkenness; twenty with not attending worship (one of them, however, absent only one Sabbath); three with reviling; one said to her child, "May the tigers eat you;" one to her dog words of cursing; three used charms to keep off evil spirits; three with saying they did not pray; one with foolish talking; and three with calumny. It will be perceived that some of these offenses would be passed over with only a remark at home. This people are much like children, and need much teaching.

Yaville. — Found encamped on the bank of the river sixteen Shans, or Siamese, who emigrated from Siam some two years before, and settled themselves on a small stream emptying into the Tavoy River, and near where it is said there was in former times a large Talign village, which was broken up by the incursions of the Siamese. How strange often are the changes of life! These Siamese left their country on account of oppression, and settled in the very place where Taligns, now slaves in Siam, once had their quiet gardens and peaceful homes.

CHAPTER IV.

"Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good."

*"Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate;
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait."*

DURING the year 1848 Mrs. Bennett suffered extremely from ill health, and was invited to return to America ; but she could not be persuaded to leave her school and other duties. She had begun a distinctively girls' school, and felt that as so little had been done in this direction, she must hold on until some one came to relieve her. In June of this year they had the pleasure of dedicating a chapel built by the Tavoy Missionary Society (mentioned before), at a cost of \$360.

In the following year, upon Mr. Brayton's presenting an urgent plea for a man to reinforce him at Mergui, Mr. Bennett, who with his wife ever felt extreme reluctance to giving up old stations for the sake of opening new fields, while without the means to man them, thinking the closing of the press the less of two evils, offered to resign at Tavoy and go to Mergui, though at great personal sacrifice. His offer was not accepted by his brethren on the field, and the following year Mr. Thomas was designated to Mergui ; he, how-

ever, located in Tavoy, and the station at Mergui was discontinued a few years later.

Mr. Bennett spent considerable time at Moulmein during 1850, taking the place of Mr. Ranney, who was absent, having accompanied Dr. Judson on the voyage which proved to be his last. At this time Mr. Bennett suffered much from fever, and from anxiety over his own work and the increased burdens borne by his wife in Tavoy. They were too much for her strength, and she was obliged, in September of 1851, to sail for Calcutta with others who were returning home. Here they were unexpectedly detained, and from this place she writes, —

“For the sake of the invalids of our party, I think it particularly desirable that we go *via* England, as we shall have the service, if necessary, of an experienced physician. I have in charge, besides my own son Edward, Mrs. Stevens’s two eldest children,¹ Miss Wright, Mr. Stilson, and his four motherless little ones. I have not myself as much strength as I could wish, considering the care and fatigue I have before me; but I look to my heavenly Father for a daily supply of this, as of other things.”

The account of the journey is best told by one of the party still living, then Miss Wright, who had assisted Dr. and Mrs. Binney in the Karen Normal School, and is now the widow of Rev. Lyman Stilson. She says, —

“My first acquaintance with Mrs. Bennett was in a short stop at Tavoy, on my way to Mergui for a little change. The multiplicity of her cares, and the magnitude of her work, amazed me even then; yet she

¹ Now the Rev. E. O. Stevens of Moulmein, and Mrs. D. A. W. Smith of Insein, Burma.

found time to go with me to some places of interest about Tavoy, among them the grave of Boardman. Our next meeting was in my sick-room. She had come to Moulmein with her little son to take him to America. For several months I had been able to sit up but a few minutes at a time, and being assured by the physician that I should recover sooner in a cold climate, I consented to embrace the opportunity to return with her. The day of my leaving that precious work was the saddest I had known since I had decided the question of duty to go. But He who 'stayeth the rough wind in the day of the east wind,' placed me in charge of one who was at once sister, nurse, teacher, and friend. She cheerfully assumed charge of the invalid as well as of the children; and had she been a regularly trained nurse she could not have been more efficient in her efforts to assuage physical pain, or cheer the fainting spirit. But invalids multiplied on her hands. The English packet-ship *Hotspur*, on which we embarked at Calcutta for London, carried a large number of passengers, among them several children, one of whom brought the whooping-cough on board, and quite too generously distributed it among the company, our party receiving its share.

"A fellow-passenger, wife of a military officer in India, returning to England for her health, became worse, and, after some weeks of great suffering from cancer, died. Mrs. Bennett assisted the lady's nurse in caring for her night and day, and in the last duties of preparing her for burial in the sea. Nor was that the only case outside our own circle where her help was freely given.

“Mrs. Bennett’s indefatigable industry never allowed an idle moment ; for if her hands were not occupied with some work of necessity or mercy, they held a book, whose contents she cheerfully shared with one, at least, who was always glad to listen. Her efforts, too, for the spiritual uplifting of those who came under her influence betokened the true missionary. The calm and quiet dignity of her manner, blended with a serene cheerfulness, must have impressed many with a consciousness that the life of a missionary was *life* indeed, in contrast with that of those who ‘live in pleasure’ and are dead while they live.

“Her equanimity in danger was manifest on one occasion when there seemed to have been but a hair’s breadth between her and a violent death. She was sitting on deck with the children one day as usual, when a heavy chain becoming detached from its fastenings up aloft fell, striking the deck at her feet, just slightly brushing her knee in its fall. It seemed a miraculous escape, for the point from which it fell appeared to be exactly over her head. Truly, He who gives his angels charge concerning us, to keep us in all our way, did not let the chain be dashed against her head nor her foot. No ; her work in Burma was not then half done, and no harm could come to her.

“On arriving in London we were domiciled in a boarding-house in Bow Lane, Cheapside, for a few days. As I was unable to cross the country to Liverpool for the steamer, we took passage in the American packet-ship Hendrick Hudson, and after a tedious voyage of five weeks reached New York. We were

met by Deacon Samuel Colgate, and conducted to his home, where Mr. and Mrs. Bennett had been entertained during their stay in that city before their departure for Burma in 1829, and again on their return in 1840.

“But the pleasant months spent with my dear Sister Bennett were ended. We parted in New York to meet but once again, a few days later, at my home in Rochester, N.Y., where she met for the first time Rev. Daniel Whitaker, her son-in-law elect, who was to return with her to Burma. Our next meeting will be ‘in the home over there.’ ”

They arrived in America in June, 1852, and after six months at home Mrs. Bennett, having left her son with his brother William, who was married and settled in Michigan, set out on her return voyage to Burma, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Rose, Mr. and Mrs. Bixby, and her own daughter Mary, who then went out as a missionary with her husband, Rev. Daniel Whitaker. The voyage was a pleasant one; the party were detained at the Cape for six weeks, awaiting a vessel, but arrived at Moulmein, June, 1853.

During Mrs. Bennett’s absence in America, Mr. Bennett writes to a friend :—

“In 1833 I resided in Rangoon, and there has never been a year since when I have not felt almost an assurance that I should again become a resident there. When Mrs. Bennett left to go home, we thought it altogether probable we should never again be domiciled together in Tavoy. This was some time before the English movement now in operation. There is an appearance that the English will now be compelled to do one of two things, either to take Burma as an additional territory and incorporate it into the Indian Empire, or bring the Burman

government so low that all white faces will be hereafter respected and treated with consideration. In either of these two events our mission-field will be extended, and men and means be needed to enter in and reap a harvest.

“When the Karen press was established, it was commenced at Tavoy, and I then gave it as my decided conviction that the press would eventually and of right be in Bassein or Rangoon. Under the English the latter would cease to be a native city ; and there are few places on the whole wide globe where the rivers so ramify, and interior communication is so feasible.”

Rangoon was taken by the English during the second Burmese war in 1852, and the following year Mr. Bennett revisited the city, not having seen it in twenty years. His journal contains this account :—

“As we steamed up the noble Rangoon River, we saw one fine large Burman village which, from appearances, seemed to have escaped the ravages of war, and the people were seen on shore pursuing their avocations peaceably. We soon came to the chokey, or village, where formerly all vessels bound to Rangoon had to report themselves before proceeding. Here a stockade had been erected by the Burmese, and another lower down on the opposite bank, in order to prevent access to the city. The steamer *Proserpine* (Captain Brooking), having been sent by Com. Lampert from the fleet at the mouth of the river with a flag of truce to the governor of Rangoon, being fired on by these stockades, returned the fire so effectually that both were abandoned by the Burmese and burnt by those on the *Proserpine* ; so that now nothing remains except a few blackened posts. Not long after, the fleet moved up the river, and Rangoon was captured. The Burmese in their wantonness and love of plunder had, after the first attack of the *Fox* and the departure of the English, cut down the trees and cut or

burnt down the buildings ; not a single brick building escaped their ravages. We landed at what was once the king's wharf, where we landed twenty years before ; but now no custom-house annoys with its hungry officials. The residence of the English ambassador at the court of Ava we found a mass of ruins. Here the Rev. E. Kincaid had laid up one-story walls out of the rubbish, and with a leaf roof overhead was shielded from the sun, and had for the time being a tolerable place of rest. It is impossible to convey the emotions which crowded the mind as we walked the streets where a whole generation had passed away since the first American missionaries commenced proclaiming the gospel. Here a Judson had labored ; here a Hough and Wade had been ironed together, and the executioner had prepared to do his abhorrent office ; here the first Burman convert had been received into the church of Christ, and the first Burman church was planted, a church which, though called to pass through many trials, has existed to the present day ; here, in this city, the gospel banner was unfurled, and those truths made known that are destined to destroy all the superstitions of Buddhism. The effort was made in weakness and much trembling, and years rolled by ere one was found to abandon his idol gods. We can now look around on little churches in the empire and in the neighboring provinces, numbering from ten thousand to twelve thousand professed disciples of Christ, — Burmans, Peguans, Taligns, and Karens ; and well may we exclaim, ' What hath God wrought ! ' ”

“ The native hospital erected by Dr. Dawson, and its compound, is very near, if not actually enclosing some of the ground on which the old mission house stood in 1813 ; and the pagoda, now in ruins, under whose shadow Dr. Judson's first zayat was built, and where he began his first wayside preaching in Burma, is a little to the eastward. After mak-

ing a visit to Shway-da-gone pagoda, we mounted and rode over the plain to the environs of Kemendine, where a piece of ground has been selected for a Karen station (now known as the Vinton Compound), where a dormitory and school-house had been erected, and the forest partially cleared, and appearances much like those presented by the backwoodsman who has made an opening and run up a log house. The buildings are on a rise of ground twenty or thirty feet above tide water, with the noble Irrawaddy in sight in front some two miles distant. A number of Karens have cleared gardens in the vicinity, and are making preparations for erecting houses. On our way to town we were shown the ax of the executioner, made for the Burman governor of Rangoon after the war began. It is a fearful looking instrument, and stands about five feet high; one-half is blade, and one-half handle: it is thick and heavy, and is a good load for any man to carry on his shoulders. I hear this instrument of death is destined for a voyage to America.

“We met several officers of the army who profess a faith in Christ, and whose daily prayer we trust is that the kingdom of peace may soon come and bless a world of sin and contention. The Sabbath before we left we had the privilege of meeting with the Burman Church in their temporary chapel, a room formerly occupied by Buddhist priests, and attached to a Kyoung. The old native pastor was present, eighty-two years of age. Here we met several of the disciples we had formerly known, still steadfast amid persecutions. As several of the members live in another village eight miles distant, we were glad to know they had been formed into another church.

“Notwithstanding for many years past the whole of Burma has been shut against the preaching of the gospel by foreign lips, and the king, a bigoted, intolerant Buddhist (if report

be true), cooking food with his own hands for the priests, and making offerings in person to them and to the pagodas, that he might gain a reward in a future state, and the people following his example ; still, amid it all, the gospel has been made known by Karen preachers, and thousands have professed their faith in Christ, some even to martyrdom, crucifixion, and death."

When Mrs. Bennett and party arrived in Moulmein, they found the Missionary Convention in session, the deputation, Drs. Peck and Granger, from America, being present. It was decided at this time that the presses at Tavoy and Moulmein be united and continued at Moulmein ; so, early in 1854, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett bade farewell to their Tavoy home, sorrowing most for the natives, who feared much that the move indicated the abandonment of the station by the missionaries ; a fear which proved groundless, however, the station having been maintained up to the present time.

In September of the same year Mr. Bennett left for his second trip to America, being away from his field of labor about a year. The visit home was saddened by his failure to find his youngest child, Edward, the boy having finished his short earthly pilgrimage before the father's arrival. The daughter, Ellen, joined her parents in 1855, and in 1857 was married to Captain G. F. Wells,¹ of Her Majesty's Navy. They resided for many years in Burma, their home being always open to the missionaries, in whose labors they were ever heartily interested.

Another event in the family, but of a very different

¹ Died November, 1891, in London.

nature, was the death of their son-in-law, Rev. Daniel Whitaker, who for a period of over four years had been a successful missionary to the Karens. Under date of August 19, 1857, Mr. Bennett writes:—

“A week ago yesterday Mr. Whitaker and family arrived from Toungoo. Mrs. Whitaker had been ill for some time, and the eldest child also; the doctor recommended a change for Mrs. W. as the only hope of life. While at Shwegyin, on the way here, Mr. W. was again stricken with fever, to which he was subject, and was not free from it on arrival. Mrs. W. seemed to improve, but he to grow worse. Medicine failed to check the fever, and all hope of his recovery was taken away. Yesterday at two P.M. he peacefully and without a struggle ceased to breathe: his end was peace. He has done his work, and well has he labored, ‘in season and out of season,’ and has gone to his reward. His sufficiency was from God, and he was permitted in his short course to see wondrous displays of divine grace in the conversion of sinners. His whole soul, while he could work, was with the Karens of Toungoo, and for the first two days after his arrival he was making preparations for his immediate return. He has gone to his home on high, not to his Toungoo home; but in the latter he will be embalmed in the memory of the Karens, as Boardman is at Tavoy. The labors of both were short as to duration, and yet long when we consider the influence exerted on the people.”

Mr. Whitaker had been transferred to the Toungoo field in 1855, after having spent eleven months traveling in the Karen hills about Toungoo, accompanied by the noted native preacher Sau Quala. On his return to Moulmein he had taken his wife and two children,

Cephas and Mary, back with him ; and during the year spent in Toungoo, little Cephas had died, and a second daughter, Ruth, had been born.

In June, 1860, Mr. Bennett, having had a very severe attack of cholera, but being by the mercy of God partially restored to his usual strength, took a month's sea-trip to Calcutta, and was much benefited thereby. During this and the following year he kept prominent in correspondence and conversation his desire to see the press removed to Rangoon, being satisfied that it would be for the interest of the mission, as Moulmein was decreasing in importance as a center, while Rangoon was fast growing, and was evidently destined to become the metropolis of Burma. This cherished plan was carried out in 1862, when the printing office and premises belonging to Mr. Ranney in Rangoon were taken over by the A. B. M. U., and the press removed thither, where it has since remained.¹

On removing to Rangoon, Mr. Bennett found his time and strength so taxed by the duties of the office, that he was unable to take up native work as much as he had formerly done. For several years the home was over the press, so he never entirely shook off, even for a few hours, the cares of business. However, the English church presented a field of labor into which he entered with zest, becoming superintendent of the Sunday-school, which position he held for twenty-six years most acceptably: his heart was especially drawn out to the children and youth. His

¹ Mr. Ranney had previous to this date married Mrs. Whitaker, and he now returned to America with his family, and settled in Homer, N.Y., where he died in 1885.

wife immediately identified herself with the Burman church, and was the faithful ally of Dr. Stevens and his wife in the Burman department of mission work.

An interesting event of this year was the conversion of three Burmese youths in Calcutta, of which Mr. Bennett writes in the following letter:—

“In one of my recent letters from Captain Wells, he says, ‘You will remember about five weeks ago I told you of the baptism and admission to Circular Road Church of one MOUNG ZOO, one of three Burmese youths sent by the King of Ava to be educated at Doveton College, Calcutta, about four or five years ago. At the same time the other two were almost christians. A messenger has arrived to take them back, and they leave on Thursday next. On hearing that they were so soon to go, they desired to profess the truth they had felt so long a time. Mr. Leslie, the pastor, examined them, and received from their schoolmaster a satisfactory testimony concerning their conduct. It was decided on Sunday that the baptism take place on Monday evening, and the chapel was crowded. The lads, and the circumstances in which they are placed, are full of interest; no one can know to what they are going. The remarks of the evening were well suited to them, Mr. Leslie referring to Joseph and Daniel at their idolatrous courts, and earnestly pressing on them the duty of steadfastness. Bidding them go to Ava, but if they were persecuted to flee, emphatically entreating them never to deny their Saviour. The position of the candidates, native Burmese from an idolatrous court, the *protégés* of a heathen king, having embraced christianity, and going back to king and court, their number, three, is significant.’ I may add that, on their arrival at Rangoon, the young men called at the press, and I furnished them books, and gave a quarto Burmese Bible to the messenger sent to bring them home. May we not believe that God has chosen them to enter where we may not, and make known to their own countrymen at court the riches of redeeming grace and love?”

CHAPTER V.

“The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.”

“That light shall shine on distant lands,
And wandering tribes, in joyful bands,
Shall come Thy glory, Lord, to see,
And in Thy courts to worship Thee.”

It was in the year 1862 that the Burma Bible and Tract Society was formed, and, in the words of Dr. D. A. W. Smith, “perhaps it is not too much to say that it owes its very existence to Mr. Bennett. While still in Moulmein, it was for years a favorite project with him to enlist the sympathies and efforts of the ever-increasing christian population of Burma in the work of Bible and tract distribution, and when the removal of the press to Rangoon was resolved upon, he went with the secret determination to start such an organization at the earliest practicable moment. This became an accomplished fact early in the year 1862; and when its first annual meeting was held, with Colonel, now Sir Arthur Phayre, its president, in the chair, and such men as Major O’Connell, Colonel Sparks, and Judge Clark, LL.D., to speak on the treasurer’s and secretary’s reports, it was a day of great rejoicing to Mr. Bennett.” The treasurer’s report showed a receipt of 1,400 rupees, and a collection of over 600 was taken.

In a letter describing the meeting, after giving these particulars, Mr. Bennett adds : —

“ I do not believe there has been a more propitious day for the civilizing and christianizing of the tribes of Burma since the landing of Judson in Rangoon nearly forty years ago, than this evening’s anniversary. God is moving the hearts of men in high places, and he has means and ways to accomplish all his purposes.”

Mr. Bennett’s interest in the work of Bible and tract distribution was not of late growth, but dated back to the time of his conversion. In the “ Eightieth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society ” is this sentence, quoted from one of his letters : —

“ Like the British and Foreign Bible Society, I date from March, 1804. Ever since I was sixteen I have been interested in Bible circulation and mission work, and I have been associated with the latter for the last fifty-four years. I can remain but a little longer here below, but the Bible Society will hear the archangel’s trump.”

The committee meetings during Mr. Bennett’s secretaryship were held at his house, and both he and Mrs. Bennett exerted themselves to make the society a success. Through its agency many copies of the Bible and New Testament, in different languages, and thousands of Scripture portions and tracts have been given to Burma, in the distribution of which Mrs. Bennett doubtless did more personally than any other missionary in the country. Indeed, Scripture and tract distribution had such a warm place in her heart that much of the time until her death she not only furnished religious publications in abundance to native preachers, but employed, at her own expense, a Burman christian

for the special purpose of scattering such publications along the railway and steamer lines.

The work of this society was of course closely connected with that of the press, and in writing of the importance of the latter, particularly in reference to the work among the Karens, Mr. Bennett expressed his convictions as follows : —

“The present generation of the Karens, where the gospel has had any influence, is almost wholly ignorant of the myths of half a century ago, and is being rid of the old superstitions which once existed. Some of these myths, or their cognates, were found in Western New York in my childhood, but light and intelligence have expelled them. The press has been a powerful engine in both countries for good; if properly managed for another half-century, who can estimate its value? As steam has revolutionized the world, so has the press, and you can no more strike out of existence the one than the other. Through the press the gospel is made known more extensively, and to a greater number, than can be done in any other way. The printing of portions of the Word has been increased, and that of tracts reduced; both have been blessed of God, and we are encouraged to continue the work.”

Both the Burma Bible and Tract Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society contributed largely to the expense of printing Scripture portions and tracts.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were closely identified with educational matters in the province. Not only were schools sustained by them, but Mr. Bennett was a member of the Educational Syndicate of British Burma from the time of its institution to the time of his death. This body has a controlling influence and power in the educational affairs of the province, and membership in the body brings grave responsibilities. Mr. Bennett

was also a member of the Government Text-Book Committee. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bennett spent much time in the examination of Burman text-books, prepared for school use by order of this society. For this work Mrs. Bennett was particularly fitted by her exceedingly accurate knowledge of the language.

Much has been said about the Burmans not receiving the gospel with the same readiness as the Karens, and it is admitted by all that they are proud and self-satisfied, and consequently slow to receive the truth; but when it is remembered how, after the Karens began to come in large numbers, the attention of the missionaries was diverted to them, it cannot be wondered at that results among the Burmans have not been greater. In referring to this subject in a letter written in 1868, Mr. Bennett notes the fact that on his arrival in Burma there were three missionaries on the field, and after the lapse of forty years there were but four Burman missionaries, Father Simons, Dr. Stevens and son, and Mr. Douglass.

In January, 1864, Mr. Bennett left for his third trip to America, remaining away from Burma not more than a year. His absence greatly increased the cares of his wife, who was as deeply interested in the success of the press as her husband could be, and who never thought of self till the needs of every one else and of the work had been well supplied. In the early days of the mission the duties of hospitality took much of the time and strength of the missionary's wife. There were no hotels or other places where strangers passing through could be entertained, but christian travelers were gladly cared

for by the missionaries. Many times when passengers on the ships seemed too ill to go farther, they were brought to them, and their houses were looked on as places of refuge by those who had been deceived or deserted in a foreign land. Throughout her long life Mrs. Bennett had frequent calls to duties of this sort, which were always responded to ungrudgingly, and she not uncommonly had reason to rejoice over the blessing which attended her ministrations.

After the death of Mrs. Wade in October, 1868, Mr. Wade came to share the Bennett home. There could be no closer friendship than existed between Mrs. Wade and Mrs. Bennett, and this arrangement was most fitting and congenial to all parties concerned. He remained with them till their return to America, his last earthly home being with Dr. and Mrs. Binney.

In the fall of 1870 Mrs. Bennett took a much needed trip to Toungoo, remaining a month away, and greatly enjoying the opportunity of renewing the acquaintance with the Crosses, and of seeing something of the field where those of her own family had labored and suffered. The journey, which is now accomplished by rail in ten or twelve hours, was at this date a very different matter, requiring from twelve to fourteen days in a native boat, with all its attendant discomforts. On her return trip the tedium was broken by meeting the boats containing twenty missionaries, and many natives, on their way to the annual convention, held that year in Toungoo.

In 1871 Mr. and Mrs. Bennett returned for the last time to America, and took occasion to visit, not only

their children, but many friends, East and West. One important result of this visit was the finding of a young man to go out as helper to Mr. Bennett in the press. This was Mr. W. H. S. Hascall, and the account of the period of his association with Mr. Bennett cannot be better given than in his own words, which follow : —

“ In the spring of 1872 I was living in Portland, Me., and, having finished my apprenticeship, was turning my eyes toward the future, when my attention was drawn to the fact that in foreign mission fields there was sometimes a call for printers as well as for preachers ; and the thought came that possibly God had been preparing me for that work. The matter came before the secretary in Boston, who said a printer was needed in Rangoon, and I was invited to meet the executive committee. The delay had been considerable, and certain obstacles had arisen deciding me to do nothing farther, and I so wrote the secretary. A few weeks after this I one evening rang the bell at my uncle’s (Dr. Shailer’s) ; the doctor himself admitted me, and without a word ushered me into the parlor, saying, ‘ Brother Bennett, this is the young man ! ’ Even in my surprise I noticed that he was a pleasant-faced man, with twinkling dark eyes, and hair nearly white, combed back from his forehead without parting. It took but a few words from him to remove my timidity, and he was soon telling me of life in Burma, of the printing work, and many other things which had to do with that far-away land. It transpired that the time of his departure was nearing, and as he had heard nothing farther through the secretary of the young printer, he had

hurried from his distant stopping-place in New York State to Boston, and on to Portland, for the purpose of ascertaining the nature of the obstacles, and if possible removing them. The above is but an instance of the way he was accustomed to act when he thought prompt and decided measures were necessary. He returned to Boston the following morning, but he had cleared away the doubts and misgivings, and I saw him next in London, a few weeks later, when we met on the way to Burma. I shall never forget the enthusiasm with which he conducted me over the Kensington Exhibition, and the interest he showed in regard to all that had to do with printing, and how well he seemed to understand all about the new styles of presses; from the smallest to the largest, nothing escaped his observant eye.

“It was in London I first met Mrs. Bennett, but only when we were at the same hotel in Glasgow did I become acquainted with her and begin to learn the motherliness and kindness of heart which in after months I knew more fully, and for which many will always remember her.

“We sailed from Glasgow, October 23, 1872, in the *Tenasserim*. The few days previous to sailing were spent by Mrs. Bennett in purchasing little presents for her Burman friends, planning a warm shawl for this old Bible woman, and some other comfort for another; continually seeking the happiness and good of others.

“Of the nearly three years during which I was associated with Mr. Bennett in Rangoon I have many pleasant recollections. Every morning at about half-past

nine the carriage would drive up to the side door of the press, and he would come in, followed by the *syce* with tiffin pail and package of books or papers; then came the morning tour of inspection, with a word of commendation for one, and a gentle reprimand for another of the workmen; he was sure of a welcome, for he was respected and loved by all. The press at Rangoon was more than a mere printing office; it was, in fact, a large publishing house, with book and job printing departments, where work was done in six or more languages, with a binding department and a type foundry, and was, besides, a depository for Scriptures and religious publications, not only for the natives of the country, but for the Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani, English, and other peoples who had come to Burma to seek their fortunes. After the rounds of the office the rest of the day till five p.m. would be filled with proof reading, business correspondence, and the multifarious duties of a large business. Then *syce* would bring the carriage to the door, and with a pleasant 'Good-night' Mr. Bennett would start on his two-mile drive to Ahlone.

"Often when Mr. Bennett opened his package of papers there would be a little note from Mrs. Bennett, especially on a birthday or holiday, when the mother heart thought I might feel particularly lonely, asking me to come out with Mr. Bennett and dine with them. These were bright spots in a life that was necessarily dull, for my eyes were weak, and evening reading among the impossibilities, so that the hours between dinner and bed-time were long and dreary. The dinner in a pleas-

ant home and an hour of quiet conversation were hence highly prized.

“Two things about Mr. Bennett especially drew my attention; one was his store of general information. He was a great reader and a keen observer, so that he was at all times ready to contribute his share to the discussion of any subject. He once told me that if he visited a new place he wished always to see the bazaar first, and note the products there displayed for sale, to learn about the people of the place. The other characteristic was his readiness to lend a helping hand to any who came to him with a tale of need. He seemed to feel that his money was given to him in trust, that he might help the unfortunate. Mrs. Bennett seemed to me to be the spiritual mother of the native christians, — always ready to listen to them, and never too busy to give herself fully to a consideration of their needs. In after years, when my removal from Rangoon to engage in evangelistic work brought me less often into her home, I always found when I did return a warm welcome, and a great interest shown in all that pertained to the fields in my care. I shall never cease to count it a privilege that I was permitted to know and love two such workers for the Master as Mr. and Mrs. Bennett.”

From the time of her last return from America, Mrs. Bennett's eyes, impaired by long years of proof reading in Burmese and Karen, as well as English, gave her serious trouble. She had suffered severe pain in them for a long time, and in October, 1875, a trip to Madras was undertaken, and from there Mr. Bennett writes :—

“My dear wife and I left Rangoon the beginning of this month, hoping she might derive benefit from consulting an oculist. After our arrival she was laid upon a sick bed, from which she was not able to rise for a week; she can now walk across the room. We hope in another month to return to Rangoon. It has not seemed possible for the past year to seek the aid we needed or the rest we required, but the arrival of Mr. Sloan, and his aptness and business habits, enable him to take the oversight of affairs; and we came here guided, we trust, by our Heavenly Father, whose we are, and whom we serve.”

While in Madras they were shown every kindness by Dr. Van Someren, the son of the gentleman who received them into his home on their first arrival in Madras in 1829, and who himself had for years been associated with them in Tavoy. Mrs. Bennett received some benefit while in Madras, but on their return to Rangoon, after they had reached the city and Mr. Bennett had gone ashore to make the necessary arrangements for her to follow, she was startled by an outcry, and going hastily to see what had happened, fell down a hatchway, carelessly left open in the confusion, and received injuries, in the breaking of some ribs, from which she suffered the remainder of her life.

Mr. Bennett was relieved of the care and responsibility of the press from 1875 to 1878 by Mr. Sloan, but on the return of the latter to America, the heavy burden was again uncomplainingly taken up, and borne for several years longer.

CHAPTER VI.

“In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in labors, in watchings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.”

“I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And to wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.”

THE following chapter of reminiscences of the period from 1867 to 1880 is from the pen of Mrs. J. N. Cushing, and will need no further introduction:—

“In March, 1867, Dr. Stevens came to the ship in Rangoon River to welcome our party to Burma, and to take Mr. Cushing and myself to his home. How surprised I was to see so well-preserved and cheerful a man, after the thirty or more years spent in hard, soul-trying labor in a hot climate! On the way to his house we were taken to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bennett. As newcomers, our eyes were wide open to take in the novelties, and to see how nearly they compared with the description of sights and sounds in the ‘Memoir of Dr. Judson’ and ‘The Lives of the Three Mrs. Judsons,’ which were familiar reading. Up the long outside stairs we went (the lower rooms being occupied by the

press), and were met at the top by a motherly woman, having a sweet face, who was introduced as Mrs. Bennett. She was so truly the 'mother of the mission,' that it seemed most natural and fitting that we should be taken to her first on entering the new life in a strange land. Her warm welcome, the gaze which went deep into the soul, the loving kiss, I never forgot. She represented to me all the word 'mother' contains. In a few minutes she had expressed her joy in the re-enforcements, and her hope that we might be spared long in the land.

"That evening, while sitting on the veranda of Dr. Stevens's house, watching the street sights, we saw Mr. and Mrs. Bennett returning from their evening drive. So well known was their inexpensive, old-fashioned carriage, that it had the name 'Jerusalem cart' given it by those who revered them. I did not understand it then, but knew afterwards how solicitous they were, that though an outing in the cool of the day was a necessity, it should be done in such a way as would leave room for no remarks on the extravagance of missionaries. Later on, when in the course of events they could have afforded a better conveyance, the same thought was uppermost, always avoiding the possibility of unkind remarks on the lavish expenditure of money.

"In the rainy season of 1868, being in poor health, I was for a time in Rangoon, boarding across the street from the Bennett house. They had built a home for their old age in Ahlone, two miles from the press, that they might escape the noise of machinery, and the heat of the upper floor under a tiled roof. Dr. Wade had

come to be cared for by Mrs. Bennett. He was by temperament depressed ; his age, his feeble health, and his sad loss, made him a child again. How tenderly she talked with him, as a mother talks with a weary child ! how she at times reasoned mightily out of the Scriptures, to show that God is unchangeable, his word sure, his love infinite, and his providences infallible ! I looked upon her with wonder.

“Rising very early in the morning, with her assistant she read proof in different languages till it was time for worship and breakfast. Interruptions were many, for she could not deny herself to the natives who came with their troubles of all kinds, which they were sure she could alleviate. No matter whether it was an aching heart or a sick body, want of work, or official influence, or a heavy debt, they thought they had only to tell her, to enlist sympathy and have the benefit of her wisdom. It was quite a custom for callers to count the pairs of sandals at the foot of the stairs ; for at certain hours there were many, and the number indicated how many natives were conversing with ‘Mamma Bennett,’ or waiting for an opportunity to do so. After breakfast Dr. Wade used to bring his manuscripts and ask advice as to the best way of putting the new Karen dictionary into shape, asking question after question which it seemed to me only a born lexicographer would be able to answer. She never failed to have the helpful ideas needed, and he would return to his room for a little while, and she turn to her servant, who waited directions for tiffin and dinner.

“In 1869 we moved to Rangoon, and had the opportu-

nity of knowing her more intimately. It is a well-established fact that a hot climate acts on the temper, and Satan enters in to take advantage; but in her he failed signally. Her patience was a wonder to me. She had an old man for a cook, and because he had served many years she was loath to rebuke or dismiss him. 'I will have patience a little longer, and then pension him, that he may reap a reward for long service,' she would say. Faithful I knew he was not, and disease had a strong hold on him; but her patient endurance bore what many would have put a summary end to. She valued every moment of time; her basket of mending was always at hand, and was taken up whenever she could have a few moments for conversation. When she could find time she took care of the lamps, a matter the mistress must attend to, in that land of careless and dishonest servants, if good light would be had. I well remember when kerosene oil was introduced in large quantities, cheap enough for missionaries to afford to use it. Mrs. Bennett bought good lamps, and together we tried to induce Mr. Bennett to put one in the place of the cocoa-nut-oil lamp he had used for many years. But no, the new-fangled lamps were not an improvement in his estimation, and were never used by him. The familiar picture of Mr. Bennett at his desk with a tall cocoa-nut-oil lamp almost on a level with his eyes, often held in his hand while reading, the heat making perspiration start freely, sitting thus till nearly midnight every evening, is recognized by all who knew him well. There were few books on printing in any of its branches that he did not read; travels and biographies were

eagerly sought for: not many men even in professional circles in America read more extensively than he, most of it being done when others had retired to sleep.

"Mrs. Bennett was careful to entertain strangers. All missionaries visiting Rangoon, whether of our own or other denominations, were welcomed heartily. Captains of American ships were always sought out by Mr. Bennett, and taken home to break the monotony of ship-life. Now and then a captain had his wife with him, and she was invited to stay ashore as long as she would. We all remember her well-appointed dinners for large companies, the pastry of her own making, and a home relish given to each article prepared by herself. And yet we knew just as well the simplicity of their daily living.

"When Mr. Cushing and I returned from a long tour through the Shan states, she was full of keen interest in all we had experienced in looking for an opening for the gospel in the regions beyond. She was eager to hear our journals read, and more than any other missionary seemed able to enter into the details of the journey, — little or no food, beds on the ground, indifference of the natives, or the interest of some sin-sick souls who seemingly were longing for redemption. Her whole heart went out in desire for the speedy evangelization of Burma, and every movement towards it interested her deeply.

"About this time there was an agitation looking toward a Baptist college in Rangoon. Various sites were thought of, but the one most desired was the compound on which they had erected their new home, the

one they had prepared for their old age. It took some consecration, and a great deal of prayer, to make yet another sacrifice, and at their time of life seek another home. But it was all done cheerfully, and the college possessed a most favorable location, where proper buildings were erected. The adjoining compound was taken by them, a large contribution toward the college given, and, until death, both were firm friends and earnest supporters of its interests.

“After 1876, whenever I was in Rangoon, Mrs. Bennett’s home was mine. Her eyesight was greatly impaired, but with a magnifying glass she still did some proof reading. She no longer dared to indulge in reading books other than her Bible, and her delight in being read to, thus keeping in touch with great minds, especially in spiritual matters, was keen. We set apart an hour a day, usually from four to five P.M., when the stream of native visitors had ceased, to forget for a time our surroundings, and be refreshed with the thoughts of others. The reading to her of Farrar’s ‘Life of Christ,’ Bickersteth’s ‘Yesterday, To-day, and Forever,’ and books of that order, was a pleasure I shall never forget.

“I had in this year returned from America, and brought with me my son, then four years old. In inquiring how I had been led to bring him, rather than leave him in America, as many had done in like circumstances, she told me the terrible struggles she had been through in earlier life, in sending her children to America, or leaving them there when returning to Burma. Her duty to the press, often superintending all its work during Mr. Bennett’s absence on jungle tours, or while

he was in America, and also her school work, made it impossible to give her children the care they needed. She had made a whole sacrifice of life and personal preferences to her calling as a missionary. To keep the children with her would be happiness, but what of the work for God to which she had given herself, and what did she owe to the children, who needed a cold climate, better surroundings, and education? She agonized in prayer over the thought of separation; she feared they would in a measure forget her, or cease to give her their tenderest love; she could not know the changes they might meet with, nor provide for them; the utter loneliness of a home in heathen lands after the children had gone and were far, far away; and yet the fear that she would be selfish in retaining them, or hinder the work which she felt must be first and last,—these thoughts made her walk the floor hour after hour, when the household was asleep; made her spend nights in prayer on her knees by the cots of the children, begging the Lord not to let her make a mistake, but at the same time pleading to be made willing to drink the dregs of this bitterest cup in life, if it was his will concerning her. Finishing the sad story of her sacrifice, with tears running down her cheeks, she said, ‘If I had it all to live over again, I think I should see it to be duty to keep my children longer, and do, if need be, a little less other work. No one can do for children what a mother can.’ Truly each heart knoweth its own bitterness.

“During her absence in Calcutta, in the dry season of 1879–1880, her native work was put in my hands; the

Bible women and teachers coming to me for reports, counsel, and monthly pay. Not till then did I know how extended were her benefactions. It was my frequent parting word to Mr. Bennett, who made his home with us, as he started for the press, to bring back with him all the rupees which for the day could be spared.

“In frequent meetings with her native assistants, I came to know how much she was to them personally. The Bible women learned of her how to preach Christ; how to interpret Scripture; how to meet the subtle objections of the heathen mind; and how to pray the effectual fervent prayer. They leaned heavily on her prayers for their success. She talked over the broad questions of the day with them; the evangelization of the world, in which they were factors; some of the theological discussions as they bore on a pure gospel; and the political features of the opium and liquor trade, and godly or ungodly administrations of governments. No native could be long connected with her in work, and be ignorant or narrow-minded.

“On her return from Calcutta I took to the wharf the easiest carriage and the slowest, safest pony owned in the mission to bring her home. It seemed almost too great an effort for her to walk from the cabin of the steamer to the carriage. The tide was high, and the gang-plank steep, her eyesight very dim, and her side always suffering from broken ribs, which felt every strain. Every uneven place in the street hurt her, yet her thankfulness for strength enough to reach the house and be at rest was great. In a few days fever set in, and she was very ill. Many times she drew me close to

her, and asked in a whisper if I thought Jesus would call her then. Her patience never forsook her, not a complaint escaped her, only the one longing to depart possessed her soul. She was tired,—weary, soul and body; to die would be gain.

“Her characteristic economy and denial of self showed very plainly when we tried to tempt her appetite, which had failed completely. The only articles of food which it seemed likely she would relish were such as in that climate were imported in tins or bottles. These of course were higher in price than food bought in the bazaar. She usually declined what we proposed, because of the price, only now and then something would be indulged in, ‘just to please you.’ I expostulated on the ground that she could afford what would make her strong. She always replied, ‘If I can indulge in a luxury, it will be the luxury of putting native preachers into the jungle districts. I want to do that more than anything else.’ She dictated her desires in this matter, and requested me to keep the paper to give to Mr. Bennett if he outlived her. God raised her up again, and gave her eleven years more of time to work at the problem which he has committed to his earth-born disciples,—the evangelization of all peoples.

“When strength returned she called together her workers, told them of her sufferings, and her longings to see the King in his beauty; but now that she knew that he desired her to serve him still longer, would they not aid her by reconsecrating themselves and redoubling their efforts? It was a very melting service with her Bible women, some of them old and gray-

headed, as they knelt for an hour in prayers of thanksgiving for her restoration to them, and of desires for greater faithfulness and greater blessings.

“Not long after that I bade her ‘God be with you,’ and left for America. Calmly, quietly, she helped me all in her power to be ready for the voyage, and sweetly commended me to Him who stills the storm.

“No missionary has a crown more thickly studded with gems, none more redeemed native souls to welcome her, none a more hearty ‘Well done’ from Him whom she loved and rejoiced in.”

CHAPTER VII.

"As the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

"Yes, we go gently down the hill of life,
And thank our God at every step we go;
The husband-lover and the sweetheart-wife.
Of creeping age what do we care or know?
Each says to each, 'Our fourscore years, thrice told,
Would leave us young;' the soul is never old!
What is the grave to us? Can it divide
The destiny of two by God made one?
We step across and reach the other side,
To know our blended life is but begun.
These fading faculties are sent to say,
Heaven is more near to-day than yesterday."

A GOLDEN wedding, which is a rare occurrence anywhere, and was an unprecedented event¹ in mission circles, was celebrated in Rangoon on January 10, 1877, being the fiftieth anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Bennett. As all of their children were absent in England or America, the usual festivities on such an occasion were not anticipated; but Dr. and Mrs. Stevens, having just returned from America by way of England, invited the missionaries in Rangoon to meet at the house of the Bennetts; and when all were assembled, Mrs. Stevens, much to the surprise and pleasure of the couple, placed upon the table a

¹ The second event of this kind was the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Brayton, their co-workers in Burma, celebrated some years later.

gold-headed cane and other gifts from their children and grandchildren, with mementos of affection from missionaries and their children, and from friends in England and America.

The rooms were decorated with flowers, and on the wall was displayed "50" in oak leaves, while underneath was the same in Burmese, Karen, and Shan, made of roses, and surrounded by other fresh flowers. The exercises commenced by the singing of the hymn "How firm a foundation," by about eighty Karens, led by Dr. Packer, and joined in by all present. A prayer of praise and thanksgiving was offered by Dr. Stevens, followed by another hymn sung by the Karens. As the honored couple stood, Dr. Stevens addressed them with, "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." The congratulations of the company followed, and wedding cake and coffee were served. It was a delightful hour to all who participated in it, and is memorable as being the only golden wedding ever celebrated by missionaries on the field, whose whole life had been spent in service to the heathen.

A few months after this they took a trip by steamer to Mandalay, preaching much to the passengers on board, and to the natives at the villages where the steamer stopped, scattering many tracts, both by the way and at Mandalay. They had intended going on to Bhamo, but the steamer leaving before they arrived, that part of the trip was given up, and they returned to Rangoon, Mrs. Bennett being somewhat improved

by the journey. Ten years previous to this Mrs. Bennett had, in company with other missionaries, visited Mandalay, making the trip up the river in a native boat, and being nine days on the way. She had then had an opportunity of seeing and talking with the chief and second queens of the Burman King, and with some of the common people, not only in Mandalay, but in Amarapura and Sagaing, visited after leaving Mandalay.

On Mr. Sloan's return to America in 1878, Mr. Bennett was asked by his co-workers to take charge of the press again; this he did, with the expectation that it would be but a temporary arrangement. The care and responsibility, however, were much too heavy to be borne by one so advanced in life and broken by many labors; and in the years immediately following, urgent, but for the time ineffectual, appeals were sent to the Board asking for some one to relieve him.

On the 16th of May occurred the fiftieth anniversary of the baptism of the first Karen convert, Ko Thah Byu, who had accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Bennett to Rangoon in 1833. He was considered *first*, not only in point of time, but also in zeal and faithfulness as a preacher among his heathen countrymen. The Bassein Karens having built a large and fine hall for chapel and school purposes, determined to dedicate it by holding a two-days' mass-meeting, commemorating the baptism of Ko Thah Byu, and naming the building in his honor. That Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were able to be present was a great cause of rejoicing, not only to them, but to all those interested in the joyful event.

One of the meetings was devoted to reminiscences and reviews of work done. We quote from Mr. Carpenter's account of the occasion : "The venerable Cephas Bennett of the Mission Press followed with a carefully prepared statistical table, showing the amount of printed matter in Karen from the humble beginning in Tavoy, forty-one years ago, down to the present time. A hundred million pages in Karen have been printed and scattered among these children of the forest, and they are what we see them now. Here plainly is revealed one of the main levers which have been lifting this race of devil worshipers into the light and liberty of the sons of God. That lever, hewed out by Jonathan Wade, has been vigorously plied by the spirited old man before us for forty years, and there is work in him yet. His honored wife, who also entered heartily into the services of the occasion, has, as it were, literally plucked out her eyes by overmuch proof reading, and given them for the elevation of Burma. All honor, we say, to the few surviving missionary veterans who have borne the burden and heat of the day!"

Rangoon was honored in 1879 by a visit from General and Mrs. Grant, on their tour around the world, concerning which event Mr. Bennett writes to Mr. Ranney:—

March 20.—General and Mrs. Grant were landed at noon yesterday, and I was privileged with an introduction on the wharf by our commissioner of Pegu. Our volunteers were called out, and the English people of the town were present, as well as a great crowd of natives. It is not often we are

allowed to see an "elephant" of this size, and just now, as we are landing troops to strengthen the force in British Burma, there is more curiosity than usual among the natives.

March 21. — There was a large party at the chief commissioner's last evening to meet General Grant. The large reception room was more than full, and as it was a "dress-party" all were in their best. A large number of the military in all the pomp of war were present.

The troops are waiting for orders to advance and show themselves in Upper Burma. King Thibaw has not yet been quite insolent enough to give a good reason for an advance, but it is expected he will be before long. The general says he is disappointed in Burma, as it has far exceeded his expectations. As the party has just come down from Upper India, this is highly complimentary. They have had a walk around our far-famed Shwe-da-gôn Pagoda, and leave to-day for Penang and Singapore.

In the dry season of 1879–1880, the cataracts which had been forming on both of Mrs. Bennett's eyes had reached a stage favorable for removal, and she went to Calcutta for that purpose. Her daughter, Mrs. Wells, accompanied her, and in the Doremus home for zenana workers, then under the care of Misses Marston and Hook, they found a pleasant home, and kind friends who gave them every attention during the three months they were there. Mrs. Bennett's nervous dread of taking ether, voluntarily giving up consciousness, possibly life itself, amounted to positive pain. She prayed much to have this removed, but the degree of excitement to which she was wrought up, and the intense heat, were very unfavorable to perfect results.

When she was laid on the operating table under the influence of anæsthetics, she immediately began to preach in Burmese, much to the astonishment of the doctor and his assistants, who inquired what she was saying, her daughter being the only one who could understand her. Her illness subsequent to the operation made a second surgical treatment necessary, and even that was only partially successful; yet to the time of her death she did not entirely lose her sight, though her eyes continued to cause much suffering. At this time, while shut in a dark room, in great weakness and depression, she suffered from a degree of mental and spiritual distress few are able to comprehend. General Litchfield, then American Consul at Calcutta, an earnest christian gentleman, called daily to inquire after her welfare, and showed her every attention in his power. When she was able to bear it, his prayers and words of comfort were much prized. One day he quoted the simple lines:—

“Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.”

The cloud lifted from her mind, and ever after these lines were fraught with special meaning to her.

An interesting bit of retrospection is found in a letter of Mr. Bennett's written in August, 1881, when they had been connected with the work nearly fifty-two years. He writes:—

“We have been lately looking over some of the changes in the Burman mission since we joined it early in 1830. We find that there have been seventy-six deaths of men and women belonging to our mission;

truly a large number for us to have outlived. This rate has been about one and a half deaths to every year. Of these seventy-six deaths, forty-five were the severance of husband and wife, while we thus far are spared to work on together. . . . From some unknown cause, a cold perhaps, I suddenly became very deaf; noticed it first in Sunday-school, as when I rang the bell on the table it gave no sound. I found on examination that the bell was all right, and then it flashed on my mind that my ears were at fault. . . . Mrs. Bennett has been trying to do something of her former mission work, having women's prayer meetings, giving out tracts and Scriptures to those who call at the house, talking with them on religious subjects, etc. Her anxiety for the conversion of the heathen does not abate with age."

The aggravated form of deafness mentioned in the letter passed away after a short time, but his hearing was thereafter more or less affected.

But little reference has been made to work among the English-speaking population of Burma, but it occupied a large place in the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, and received its proportion of time and attention as well as of means.

Dr. J. N. Cushing of the Shan Mission, long associated with them in the field, in referring to their work in Rangoon, says, —

"The services rendered to the Burman and Karen peoples might well have satisfied a missionary's heart, but these large-souled, self-denying servants of the Master cherished the broad, christian principle of doing with their might whatever their hands found to do. Never forgetting that their first service was due to the natives, they saw and improved important opportunities for side work among the English-speaking population of the country. Rangoon, as the commercial metropolis of Burma, has an English-speaking population of many thousands of all social grades. Coming to the city to live shortly after the annexation of Pegu Province, they acquired and maintained a wide acquaintance with this part of the people, and sought every opportunity of

making that acquaintance fruitful of good to those whom they knew. They took a deep interest in the English-speaking Baptist Church, and gave it their hearty support. Mr. Bennett was superintendent of the Sunday-school for twenty-three years, and during much of that time it was the only English-speaking Protestant Sunday-school in the city. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Bennett's work in the church did not abate. She gave liberally towards the completion of the fine new church edifice and the removal of the heavy debt that rested upon it for a while. Shortly after assuming the pastorate of the church in March, 1888, I had a good illustration of Mrs. Bennett's thoughtfulness for the welfare of the church, and unostentatious manner of giving assistance. Calling me to her house one day for a private interview, she expressed her concern that as the heat of that season of the year was extreme, and, the church was not furnished with punkas for the comfort of the congregation, persons were already using the fact as an excuse for not attending the services. With the strictest injunctions that the source of the gift should not be made known to any one, she placed between two hundred and three hundred rupees in my hands for the purpose of hanging the requisite punkas in the church. The personal influence of Mrs. Bennett was felt powerfully in the church and congregation. It is astonishing how with her other domestic and missionary cares, she found time to visit so widely among the people, and impress her religious influence upon them. Old and young trusted her as a friend, and loved her as a mother. No person in the parish was more intimately acquainted with the details of personal and family life in the congregation, or found his or her suggestions and advice more readily heeded than Mrs. Bennett.

In 1882 Mr. Bennett was finally relieved of the care of the press by Mr. F. D. Phinney, who arrived in April, and took entire charge in September of the same year. In December Mr. and Mrs. Bennett enjoyed one of the most delightful of the rare opportunities for christian fellowship of their lifetime, when they, in company with several of the Burma missionaries, attended the second Decennial Missionary Conference held in Calcutta. There were present four

hundred and seventy-five missionaries, members of the conference, one hundred and eighty-one of whom were ladies, and forty-six natives. Of the European missionaries it may be interesting to note that one hundred and thirty-eight had arrived within the decade; forty-nine had been ten years at work; twenty-eight, twenty years; seven, thirty years; three, forty years; and only Mr. and Mrs. Bennett over fifty years. The conference continued for a week, and subjects vital to mission work were freely discussed by the ablest men in the field. At the close the three senior members of the conference, Mr. Bennett, Rev. G. Bowen (Methodist Episcopal, Bombay), and Rev. Dr. Newton (American Presbyterian, Lahore), were called upon for a few farewell words. Mr. Bennett spoke as follows:—

“This is one of the happiest days of my life. I never expected to see such a company of dear missionaries, and all devoted to doing good among the heathen. When we arrived first in Calcutta, there were not more than fifty missionaries in all India, and now to see before me in one assemblage over four hundred, has produced such feelings of gratitude to the Giver of all good, that I have often come near breaking down, as we have met here day after day and seen the zeal of the young people in Sunday-school and other missionary work. I can only say, God bless the young women! God bless the young men! and may a greater measure of his spirit rest upon them all. Pardon me for using the word ‘young;’ I suppose that two-thirds of all those I see before me have been born since I came to Burma. God bless you all! and make you a still greater blessing to India.

“More than sixty-three years ago, at the age of sixteen, it pleased God to make me a new creature, filled with astonishment and gratitude for sins forgiven. Within a year after a voice seemed to whisper, ‘You will spend your life in Burma.’ This was resisted some years, but in 1829 we arrived in Calcutta on our way to Burma. In those days there was not a foot of railway in all England or America. The tele-

graph did not come until some ten years later, and the Suez Canal later still. Steam was then in its infancy all the world over. Missionaries then came for life, and that life was not expected to extend ten years; no hope was held out that the home of youth would ever be revisited. The only expectation was to live and labor and die among the heathen. Now how changed! It seems almost a miracle. Instead of a five-months' voyage on board ship, having to go around the Cape, those of you from England can see the home of your childhood in thirty days, and those from America in forty to forty-five days. Then there was only one three-storied house in this city, called now a 'city of palaces.' The facilities for missionary labor have also been enlarged in these days, and the sun of missionary work seems approaching its meridian. Now, my dear friends, before I leave you, let me entreat you in all your labors to 'have faith in God.' Your work is his. Be perfectly willing that all the praise and glory be given to the blessed Saviour, Jesus. I will close in the words of another:—

““Jesus only;” in the shadow
Of the clouds so still and dim,
We are clinging, loving, trusting,
He with us, and we with him,
All unseen, though ever nigh,
“Jesus only,” all our cry.

“Jesus only,” in the glory,
When the shadows all are flown,
Seeing him in all his beauty,
Satisfied with him alone.
May we join his ransomed throng,
“Jesus only,” all our song.”

CHAPTER VIII.

"The things that are seen are temporal."

*"Change and decay in all around I see ;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me."*

A LECTURE entitled "Rangoon Fifty Years Ago," was given by Mr. Bennett before the Young Men's Institute in Rangoon, September 2, 1884 ; and as a better description of the city, as known by the earliest missionaries, all of whom have now passed away, is probably not to be found, it is given here with only the omission of such parts as would not be intelligible to those unfamiliar with the streets and buildings of the Rangoon of to-day.

"The traveler by sea on his way to Rangoon fifty years ago, after passing the mouths of the Irrawaddy, and the lowlands on its banks, would find the entrance to the Rangoon River made known by a grove of palm trees on Elephant Point. It was so called from the fact that, when approaching the mouth of the river, in a certain position of the vessel the sailor would see on the point a very proper image of an elephant, made by a group of the taller and lower palm trees on the background of a clear sky. After Tharawaddy usurped the kingdom of Ava, he caused many of the trees to be cut down, in order to destroy the landmark. Though

the image of the elephant does not exist, a few of the trees are left as a landmark to this day, and the name is retained.

“Rangoon, at the time we speak of, 1833, was under Burman rule, with a viceroy at the head of government, appointed by the king at Ava, then the capital of Burma. This viceroy was an amiable, gentlemanly, and pleasant Burman. His rule over Pegu for ten years was peaceful, the people prosperous and contented. Crime was very rare. There were no opium or grog shops in those days in Rangoon, nor were there any then known in Burma.

“Those who have been in Rangoon only a few years can form no adequate conception of what it was fifty years ago. There is not now left a single foot of soil, roads, buildings, or any indication of what was once Rangoon, except the Soolay Pagoda, an image house on Dalhousie Street, and the Brahmin Temple, near the General Hospital; and even all these have been so altered, added to, and changed, that they would hardly be recognized by the few English residents that were familiar with them in 1833.

“The voyager, in coming up the river, would be stopped at the Chokey Village, a few miles below Rangoon, and there be required to give an account of his reasons for coming, present his papers, invoices, etc., and get a permit to proceed to town. The walls of the stockade would soon come into view, as he had a short time before seen the Shwe-da-gôn Pagoda on the hill, against the sky. The appearance of the pagoda was then far more imposing than it is now, for the trees

which surround it rob it of half its height. He would soon see the stockade and the house outside its walls, and the timber yard of Mr. Sarkey, and be anchored near the only wharf on the river, which was near where is now Barr-street Landing. On going ashore he would first be taken to the custom house to see if his report tallied with that given at the Chokey. Here all the goods were examined, and the duties paid in kind, every tenth being laid aside for the king. The piece-goods and the book-muslins, which were then the principal articles of foreign import, as well as other goods, were then stamped with an indigo-blue peacock, the flag of Burma. Then you were at liberty to remove your goods to the *godown*, shop, or bazaar. On entering the stockade gate, however, you would be reminded by the gatekeeper that he had not been included at the custom house, and that an *octroi* duty would be acceptable, and generally a piece of whatever you have will be satisfactory. Now you pass the gate, and become amenable to the laws and usages of the stockade.

“The population in and around the stockade may have numbered twenty-five thousand. The stockade was made of solid teak timber, from eighteen to twenty-four inches square, set upright, nearly eighteen feet high, crossed horizontally by timbers bolted on the inside and outside. Near the top, at intervals, were portholes about a cubit square for musketry, and with a platform running all around on the inside of the inclosure, with earth steps in various places. There were five massive double-leaved gates, two on the

north, and one each on the other sides. There were small posterns in these gates, as well as several on the north side, opening upon the morass. There were no guns mounted on the stockade, nor any appearance of a warlike nature. The inclosure had an area of not far from seventy-five acres. The place is described in 1794 by Colonel Symes, as 'along the bank of the river about a mile, and not more than a third of a mile in width.' Major Snodgrass, in 1800, says, 'About nine hundred yards on the bank of the river, six hundred or seven hundred yards wide at the broadest part, defended by an inclosure of palisades sixteen to eighteen feet deep on the river, on the other three sides by a shallow creek or ditch, and at the west end by a morass, crossed by a bridge.' The stockade, as we found it in 1833, was a new one, built after the war with the English in 1826.

"As we enter the principal gate from the custom house, we are on a street running north, and soon come to a street running east and west, called Kaladan, because on this street are collected the foreigners,—Armenians, Jews, Moguls, Parsees, Hindoos, and a few Chinamen. All the buildings on this street, though the wealthiest part of the town, had a shabby appearance, and were evidently of an architecture not Burman. They are mostly low, two-storied, small structures; the lower story generally brick, rarely stuccoed, the second story being of bamboo, covered with leaves in the rainy season, and with split bamboo matting in the hot weather, letting the sun through the interstices.

"Every house on this street, as well as those all over

the town, was required to have jars of water in or beside the house, as well as pots of water on the roof. In addition to these precautions in case of fire, there must stand beside each dwelling a long bamboo with a hook at the end to pull off the thatch, and another with a beater of split bamboo about a cubit square to beat out the fire in the leaves. These were all required by government. As a further personal protection, some of the merchants, for the safety of their valuables, had, not uncommonly, in many of the lower stories of the brick buildings, a kind of cellar from five to eight feet square, with brick sides four or five feet deep, with a trap-door in the floor, into which, if fire were not too near, the goods of the shop were hurriedly thrown, the trap-door laid down and covered with mud, which was always near at hand. Sometimes the cellar was the only safe the merchant had for other valuables.

“After passing a few hundred feet beyond the Kaladan we come to the main street of the city, being perhaps a foot wider than the others, and this only ten or twelve feet wide. On this street was the palace of the viceroy, as well as the high-court building. This road, as well as the three others, was paved with brick laid edgewise, and with a brick drain of some twelve inches on either side. The other streets had similar drains. As every spring tide ran all over the town, these drains were often full of little fishes, in water three or four inches deep, to the amusement of the children.

“The palace of the viceroy was a series of buildings in the Burman style of architecture, elevated about five feet from the ground, with a large open space

around them. The audience hall of the buildings was in front, a little back from the street, and open forty or fifty feet on the street to the south. On petition days the viceroy was seated on his cushion on the north side of the room, and the petition reader on the south side, nearly opposite, a large space being between them, while the audience might be on either side of the room. This building, as we have said, was a little back from the street, and at each corner of the street was a bazaar, or small stall, in which bunches of wax candles of a viss (three and one-half pounds) weight each were suspended, and for sale at about a rupee each. As it is a Burman custom when visiting an officer of government, or one in good position even, to make a present of some sort, these candles were ready for sale and use for a friendly call, or for the poor on presenting a petition. It would be in vain to try to say how often each bunch of these candles had been thus presented and again resumed its place in the stall. However, should the call be one of business, and a petition be presented, the present would bear some proportion to the aid sought. Sometimes, if only complimentary on the part of the caller, a return present would be made, not for value received, but as a souvenir. The entrance to this hall of audience was on the east side, where was a lobby, and here the shoes and sandals were deposited, as no shoes (nor feet either) were permitted to be seen by the viceroy. The petitions and public papers presented to the viceroy are read aloud by the petition reader, seated at the south, far away from him, and in a loud and sonorous voice.

"The High Court was some distance south of the viceroy's palace, and on the Strand. This building was an open inclosure or shed, with a floor nearly five feet from the ground, and seventy or eighty feet square. The only steps were on the north side, where shoes and sandals were deposited on entering. The judges were generally seated on the east front, and the stocks for confinement were near by on the ground outside. Every Burman officer of note had these ready instruments of detention in his yard, as jails were not popular with the Burmans.

"There were within the stockade only five or six brick buildings belonging to the foreign merchants. There were only eight or ten Europeans, or 'white faces' as we were called, then residing in Rangoon. Among them were four English merchants, who dealt in book-muslin and cotton piece-goods. At that day nearly every Burman wore a piece of white book-muslin for a turban, costing from one to five rupees per piece, according to quality. A piece of book-muslin was a very handy and acceptable present to a Burman. The Armenian merchants were the next in mercantile pursuits, with a Greek or two, some Moguls, and others.

"One of the brick buildings in town was a large two-storied structure, built in the Calcutta style of architecture. This was called the Residency, as the resident to the court of Ava, Colonel Burney, with his family, temporarily resided there. All of these brick buildings were destroyed before the last war by the natives undermining the outer walls and digging up the floors in search of treasure. The other buildings in

town were of bamboo, in the usual style of Burman houses, — built near the ground, and of a poor and squalid appearance.

“All the high ground outside the stockade, now occupied by the Jail, the Insane Asylum, the Karen Theological Seminary, the Baptist College, St. John's College, and the residences west of Godwin's Road, were mango, jack, and pineapple gardens, such as are now near Kemendine. Pineapples were at one time so plentiful that four annas would buy a hundred. The east gate on the north side of the stockade was called the ‘death gate.’ Out at this gate all funerals and executions were required to pass, and here was a larger collection of Burman houses, many image houses, small pagodas, and little tanks. The old burning and execution ground is now covered by the great Surati Bazaar. The grounds east of the Soolay Pagoda were pleasure gardens belonging to Burmese officials and merchants. Here picnics were of frequent occurrence in the fine weather. The Armenian and Portuguese cemeteries were to the east of these gardens.

“As no carts were allowed in the stockade, it was at this gate that preparations for gala days were made by the devout worshipers who rode in the Burmese two-wheeled cart, with unwieldy buffaloes for draft, highly ornamented with bands of scarlet cloth and a profusion of bells, and who followed the cart road to the Great Pagoda, passing Rebecca's Well, and a great variety of sacred places on the way. On this road there were once counted ninety-six pagodas, with others not far off from the road. Nearly all of these have disappeared.

Rebecca's Well is a name still heard. This well has been and still is famous as giving the best drinking water in town. It is on Phayre Street, and was some distance north of the stockade. It was so called by the English residents because here at all times of the day, and often at night, would be found with their earthen waterpots the maidens of the town, having come for water and to gossip. It was almost the only well from which the people in the stockade drew their drinking water.

"Where the high school now is was a cluster of what was called the king's kyoungs, very large and massive wooden buildings, with their eaves covered with beautiful and profuse gilded carvings. The first few years of English occupation these were made the public buildings of the province, until other places were provided in town. The raising of the streets, and the various other improvements made since the occupation by the English, have so altered nearly all things that there remains not a recognizable foot of old Rangoon anywhere to the south of the Great Pagoda. Before the last war the stockade and the people then living in Rangoon were all removed to near the pagoda, and all the buildings in the place were destroyed.

"The trade of the port was very small, and, as the rules for export were often prohibitory, a vessel of twenty to forty tons, with now and then a Burman Kattoo, was able easily to convey from port to port all the fish, gnapee (rotten fish), betel-nut, tobacco, chillies, and other things that then formed the staple of Rangoon commerce. These vessels were rarely full

of freight. The most profitable employment was the smuggling of gold, silver, and precious stones to Moulemein and Calcutta.

“There was on the west of Rangoon, as now, the village of Kemendine. Here was then the King’s Navy Yard, where were kept forty or fifty of the king’s war boats. Excavations for docks were made on the banks of the river, where the boats were laid up ready for use, and where they could be repaired if necessary. The people who manned these boats were the king’s people, who, with their families, were not allowed to live in Rangoon, as quarrels and unlawful demands were too frequently made in the king’s name.

“As there was no authorized coin in use, and only now and then a few rupees found their way to Rangoon, and even when they did were generally treated as bullion by the natives, the means for the payment of purchases was bullion, gold, silver, and precious stones. The silver and gold were often in bits, and as the quantity accumulated they were melted and cast into what was termed ‘Burma biscuits.’ They were so called from their form, as they were assayed in small saucer-like crucibles, and were worth from ten to fifteen rupees each. These, as well as rupees, were cut up to make change. Nearly every house had small scales and weights for this purpose. Instead of copper coin for small change, lead was used, weighed at a certain rate per viss. As the silver in use varied from pure to an alloy of from five to forty per cent, a set of people called pwai-zas were licensed by government to decide on the value, when the parties could not agree, and they

were paid according to the value of the amount decided on. As a consequence of the cutting up of quantities of silver, small pieces would fly off and be lost, the floors being of split bamboos. When the house had been occupied for some years by the pwai-zas, and a new one was to be built, the earth under the old one would be dug up for a foot or two, taken down to the river and washed in a wooden bowl, to recover the bits of gold or silver.

“In consequence of the various alloys of silver, and the inconvenience of the bits, there were a number of assayers, or silver refiners, who were not allowed in town on account of the danger of fire; but they lived in a cluster of huts near what we called ‘Sales’ Pagoda.’ Here the merchants and others could have their bits of metal melted into one mass, and the percentage of alloy reduced or increased as they pleased. All this assaying and refining would be done *gratis*, as they used their crucibles but once; and their remuneration was obtained in the sale of the crucibles to the potteries, where the Pegu jars were made, the potters using them in making the glazing on the jars.

“Through the ignorance of the Burmese Government, all gold, silver, precious stones, rice, paddy, and some other things, were prohibited from being exported. With these clogs to commerce, the merchants had great difficulty in making payments for goods in Calcutta. Hence a system of smuggling was carried on, and several small schooners were employed in this work. The penalties in case of detection were severe, —confiscation, and twenty per cent added if any one

put in a claim as owner for the seizure. Of course the loser was generally silent, and bore his misfortunes as well as he could.

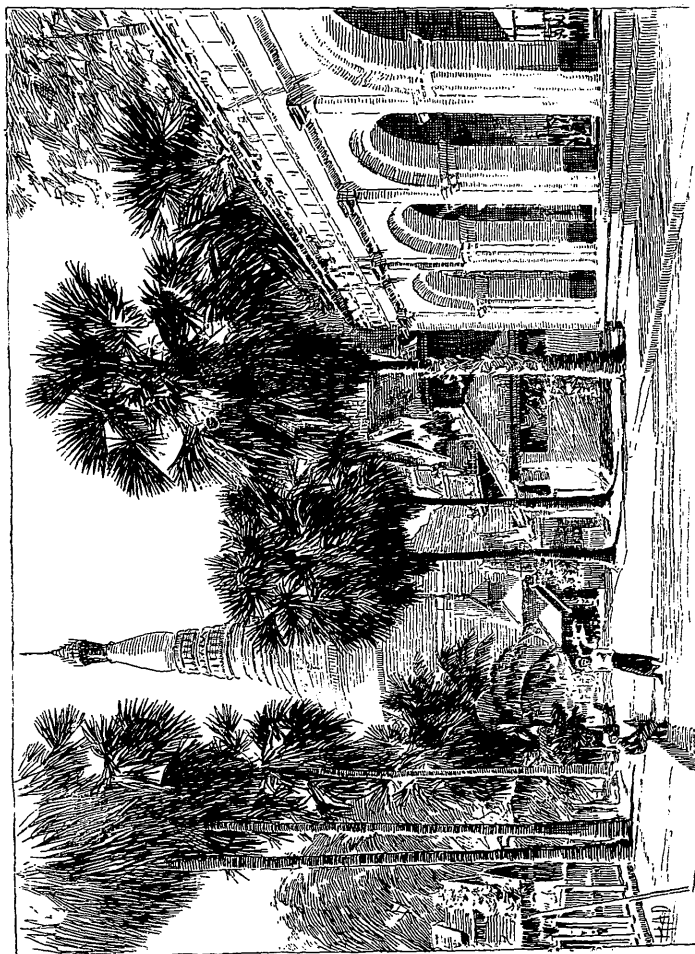
“There was in those days a class of people called ‘pagoda slaves.’ These unfortunates were descendants of those who had been condemned for some crime in the past. They were a kind of offering to the religion of Buddha, and their numbers might be added to at the will of some of the woons, or of the king. They were not allowed to live in the town, or mingle with the common people. They had huts by themselves around the base of the pagodas; and it was their business to keep the surroundings in order, and live, like the priests, on the offerings of the people. Unlike them, however, they were not allowed to perambulate the town for morning rice, but lived on the rice and vegetables offered on the altars around the pagodas. Rice was plentiful in those days, for none was exported; and eight annas or a rupee would buy a basket of the best. The altars were often overloaded; and I have seen cartloads of cooked rice and vegetables thrown over the upper wall on worship days. These slaves were freed by the English Government.

“As the officers of the Burman Government were not paid salaries, custom gave them some privileges; but there were other ways whereby they obtained their support from the people besides those we term legitimate. Police were unknown, but there were hangers-on to every official. They were more or less bold, as their masters were higher or lower in the official scale. They were mere blood-suckers on the community, and were

ever ready to stir up strife between neighbors, or in families. If a child did not have his way, the father and mother were in danger of finding themselves in the stocks (which were in every official's yard) without any reason being given. Possibly no one would appear against them at all, and no reasons be given why they were there ; still, relief from the stocks could not be hoped for without the payment of a bribe, or fine, which would be graded by the temper of the official, or the means of the payer. In this way husband and wife might punish each other or their neighbors.

“ On worship days the viceroy usually went to the pagoda about eight A.M., leaving the stocks to be ruled by the woon-douk, or by the ye-woons. All fires were to be put out while the viceroy was absent ; and there were now let loose the ‘paquets,’ or executioners, an outlawed tribe of police, who had a circle tattooed on each cheek, and were called ‘spotted faces ;’ and these would perambulate the streets with hen feathers in their ears, which they would thrust into the ashes (the cooking was done by the side of the house), and if the feather was curled up by the heat of the ashes, nothing less than a present of four annas to a rupee would satisfy them. If not promptly given them, the man, woman, son, daughter, or any one they could lay hold of, would be taken to the woon's, put in the stocks, and a far greater amount might then be extorted. There were also many other ways of annoyance under the semblance of good government. Let us be grateful that we are not under the old Burman police, and thankful that the stocks are unknown in Rangoon.”





THE PAGODA AT RANGOON.

CHAPTER IX.

“Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

“Hasten, Lord, the glorious time,
When beneath Messiah’s sway
Every nation, every clime,
Shall the gospel’s call obey.
Mightiest kings his power shall own,
Heathen tribes his name adore;
Satan and his host o’erthrown,
Bound in chains, shall hurt no more.”

As a contrast to the previous chapter, and to show the great changes which have taken place in Rangoon during the lifetime of Mr. Bennett, a warm personal friend, Sir Charles Bernard, formerly Chief Commissioner of Burma, has kindly prepared the following description of the Rangoon of to-day:—

“Rangoon, its appearance, its circumstances, and its population, have greatly changed during the last sixty years. In 1833, as described in Mr. Bennett’s lecture, Rangoon was a collection of huts, grouped around the viceroy’s palace and the fort. It contained a population of twenty-six thousand. It was approached by a tortuous and difficult channel. Tidal swamps covered much of the ground. There were two or three timber-

houses, and four brickyards, near the river. There were no decent shops or markets. The widest road was thirteen feet across, and unpaved or ill paved. Good drinking water was scarce; and the place was unhealthy. The largest ship in the river was a three-hundred-ton craft, and there were few sea-going vessels. There was not a single passable road into the interior. There were hundreds of Buddhist pagodas, and scores of monasteries, but there was no christian church or school in the place.

“The present Rangoon is a city with a hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, managed by an elective municipal council, on which sit European, Burmese, Chinese, Hindoo, and Moslem representatives of the many races that compose the polyglot population. The municipality has a yearly income of five hundred thousand dollars. It keeps in repair about sixty miles of streets and roads, some of which are ninety feet broad, and the finest of which is a raised boulevard by the river bank, flanked on the north by the finest buildings in the town. There are hundreds of two-storied and three-storied houses, some of masonry, and more of wood. Some of the law courts, hospitals, colleges, schools, banks, shops, and public offices are handsome, commodious structures. Rangoon now contains five large markets, two of which belong to the municipality, and yield a yearly rental of forty-eight thousand dollars. In these markets many hundreds of Burmese women, as well as some few Chinese and Indians, keep shops and stalls, which are open every day. An excellent supply of pure water is carried all over the town.

The more densely peopled quarter is sewerred on Shone and Aults' pneumatic system. The swamps have been reclaimed, and the silt from the river, which rises twenty-one feet at the autumn spring-tides, is kept out by embankments. Vaccination is nearly universal; and Rangoon is now in ordinary years healthy, as Eastern cities go.

"The port and its approaches are managed by a Harbor Board, on which sit merchants of many races, and which enjoys an income of \$360,000 a year. The river side is fringed with wharves, jetties, warehouses, and appliances which can accommodate half a dozen big steamers at a time, and unload them in a couple of days. There is a great export trade in rice and timber; and in the busy season over seventy ocean steamers and ships of many nations can be seen in the river at once. The merchandise imported into and exported from Rangoon last year was valued at \$52,000,000; and all this trade passed up and down the river without a serious accident to a single vessel. Steam trams, bullock carts, and horse carriages throng the streets, which are lighted at night with American oil.

"Fifty steamers and ninety barges, belonging to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, ply on the channels of the delta, and up the Irrawaddy and its tributaries seven hundred and fifty miles, from the sea up to the borders of China on the northeast, and to the confines of Assam on the north. Some of these river steamers carry twelve hundred passengers on their decks, and a thousand tons of goods in their barges; they are lighted by electric lamps, and would be fine boats even on the great American rivers.

“Besides good metaled and bridged roads, two railroads run inland from Rangoon; one of them is opened five hundred and fifty miles, and is being extended. The railroads do a big traffic: they carry passengers at the rate of half a cent per mile; and they yield all around a surplus of \$250,000 a year, after paying all expenses and four per cent on their capital cost. The Irrawaddy steamers and the two railways make Rangoon the *entrepôt* for the trade of Burma, of the Shan states, and even for the regions beyond; for Rangoon sends salt, piece-goods, and hardware right into Western China. Her direct trade with China will develop indefinitely when the railway is extended through the Shan states into China. Rangoon is now connected by postal and telegraph lines with every considerable place in the interior of Burma, as well as with India and Singapore. There is still a gap of about a hundred and twenty miles between the most westerly station of China and the most northerly of Burma; when this gap shall have been covered, Rangoon will be in direct telegraphic communication with Shanghai and Peking by land telegraph lines.

“The making of Rangoon has been mainly due to the rice trade. This commerce has been rendered possible by the erection of some twenty-six mills on the Rangoon River bank, where rice is milled and cleaned for the markets of the world. Rangoon sends away yearly from eight to nine thousand tons of rice; and her customers come from Europe, America, Africa, China, Japan, and the Philippine Islands. The rice mills are owned by Englishmen, Germans, Chinese, Indians, and occasion-

ally by Burmans. They have made the fortunes of the Burmese rice growers ; for every petty peasant can put his rice on a steamer or a railway truck or a boat, and in two or three days he gets from the Rangoon miller cash price at the highest rate quoted, at a place which is in daily communication with all the great rice markets of the world ; and he gets his price without the intervention of a middleman or agent, within a very few weeks of his harvest. A rich soil and a bountiful rainfall are always present in lower Burma ; but without the rice mills the Burmese rice growers would have no market for their surplus grain.

“Rangoon now supplies most of the teak timber consumed in many parts of the world ; and there are a score of sawmills and lumber yards along the Rangoon River. Cutch (a substance extracted from the heart-wood of the acacia catechu, used for dyeing, tanning, and preserving nets) and petroleum are among other products of Burma ; so, too, are rubies and jade stones.

“The moral and intellectual change in Rangoon has also been considerable. There are now, compared with former times, but few pagodas, and only a small number of monasteries ; but there are from fifteen to twenty churches or places of christian worship, at which the gospel is preached every Sabbath in English, Karen, Burmese, Tamil, Chinese, and occasionally in the Shan and Hindustani languages. There are two colleges and many christian schools for boys and girls, besides a number of secular schools where the Bible is not taught. There are two institutions where native youths are prepared for the christian ministry, and five normal

schools where men and women are trained to be school teachers. There are four or five christian societies or organizations engaged in evangelizing work in Burma ; of these the American Baptists are by far the largest and most successful. Rangoon is the headquarters of all these societies save one ; and it is the center of christian work for Burma and its dependencies, just as it is the center of the civil government and of trade. There are several printing presses in the city, and newspapers are published in English, Burmese, and Karen. The largest printing establishment is the Baptist Mission Press, from which have issued many hundreds of thousands of copies of the holy Scriptures, of Scripture portions, of tracts, of leaflets, and of christian school-books in two dialects of the Karen language, in Burmese, in Shan, and in English. Sixty years ago there were hardly any christians in Burma. By the census of 1891 there were a hundred and twenty thousand christians, and this total does not include the younger children of christian Karens belonging to the Baptist churches. The character and destinies of the Karen race have been altered by the gospel, which under God's blessing has spread widely, and is still spreading among them. They are, however, not a city-loving race, and most of those in Rangoon are villagers under instruction at, or attached to, the different missionary institutions at headquarters.

“Burmans form the majority of Rangoon citizens. They are better off than they were in 1833 ; they live in more comfortable houses, fare better, and wear better clothes than they did in those days. More of them are

educated; and an increasing number can talk and write English. But for the most part the Burmans are the same laughter-loving, careless folk they were, lacking in steadiness and persistency, though not in industry. Although the trade, the wealth, the population, and the facilities for money-making have increased many fold since 1833, still there are very few men of wealth among the Burmans. They seem to get rid of their money as soon as they make it; and there are hardly ten Burmans in the country to whom any bank would advance five thousand dollars on their individual credit. The banking business, the rice mills, the big trading concerns, and the large shops are all owned and financed by foreigners whether British, German, Chinese, Hindoo, or Moslem.

“Rangoon of the present day does not compare favorably with the Rangoon of Mr. Bennett’s time, in so far that it contains a number of licensed liquor shops, and three licensed opium shops. The majority of customers at these shops are Indians and Chinese, rather than Burmans. Still, the existence of these shops permits the Burmese to indulge openly in vices which, under Burman rule, could be pursued only by stealth. Even now, however, it is most rare to see a Burman drunk in the streets; and we have never heard of a Burman woman being seen drunk in public. Gambling, and the crimes which follow in the wake of gambling and drink, may be more common than they were in 1833; but we have no precise information about those times.

“Under British rule criminal and civil justice may

be more tardily administered than it used to be ; lawyers and appeals are certainly more costly ; but there is less official oppression of the poor, and there is now no systematic and overt bribery and corruption of high officials, though there may still be room for much improvement in the conduct and character of some of the subordinate police and other officials."

CHAPTER X.

“Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you.”

“Then let thy heart be calm and stayed and brave.
The One who walketh with thee in the way
Is called ‘The Mighty God;’ then gladly lay
Thy sorrows and thy burdens all on him,
And he will carry them. No cloud can dim
The light of perfect love; his thoughts toward thee
Have been naught else from all eternity.
’Tis but a little while, and thou shalt stand
Within the radiant, undefiled land
Of Christ the King.”

THREE years after the golden wedding in 1877 occurred the semi-centennial of the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Bennett in Burma. Four years later Mr. Bennett’s eightieth birthday was celebrated, the account of which by Dr. D. A. W. Smith was published at the time and will be of interest here.

✓ “Yesterday, March 20, 1884, this veteran namesake of the zealous and irrepressible apostle of our Lord celebrated, or rather was made to celebrate, his eightieth birthday. I say ‘made to celebrate,’ for, greatly to his surprise, on being summoned home from a birthday dinner given to him and his wife by a near neighbor, he found his house filled with self-invited guests, who had come to congratulate him on the completion of fourscore years of a busy and eventful life. Twenty-

three missionary friends, and upwards of fifty from other callings in life, headed by our honored chief commissioner, Sir Charles Bernard, and wife, participated in this feast of commemoration.

“After an informal half hour spent in social converse, the organ gave forth in tender strains the old familiar tune of ‘How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,’ and all joined in singing the hymn, while the aged pair sat side by side, a living illustration of all the stanzas, but pre-eminently so of the lines, —

“‘E’en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs, they shall still in my bosom be borne.’

“After the singing of the hymn a congratulatory address was read by Dr. Stevens, that most appropriately expressed the feelings of all present.

“On the completion of the address Mr. Bennett arose and with choked utterance expressed his surprise and gratification at this most unexpected demonstration. He then indulged the friends with a few reminiscences, mostly of his boyhood and early manhood; and among other things referred to a birthday present lying on the table, which had been received by mail the preceding day from a granddaughter in America, which consisted of photographs of the first pages and of the editors of the principal religious weeklies of America; and among those papers was one which he had helped to found. Its eye was not dimmed nor its natural force abated. I am sure both the editor and the readers

thereof will be *Bright* enough to guess the present name of the paper which began its career in Utica, N.Y., as the *Baptist Register*.

"At the close of Mr. Bennett's interesting reminiscences prayer was offered by Mr. Brayton, and the hymn 'Abide with me' was feelingly sung by all; and with renewed congratulations to the admired host and hostess the company dispersed.

"It is an interesting fact that, if all are spared, the year 1888 will witness the eightieth birthdays of four Rangoon missionaries, — Mrs. Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Brayton, and Mrs. Binney. Mrs. Bennett will during that year complete her fifty-eighth year of missionary service, Mr. and Mrs. Brayton their fiftieth, and Mrs. Binney her forty-fifth."

With the exception of Mrs. Binney, who was called home within two months, all lived to and beyond the date mentioned.

In the early part of this year Mr. and Mrs. Bennett had the pleasure of a visit from one of their grandsons, F. M. Bennett, Assistant Engineer in the United States Navy. His recollections of the visit are given here as showing some of Mr. Bennett's personal characteristics and his standing in the community.

He says, "I used to go out riding or walking with him a great deal, most enjoyable expeditions to me, and a revelation, as showing in the stores of his mind the fruits of a long life well spent. He was familiar with the habits of every living thing we saw, and his knowledge of the peculiarities and characteristics of the vast array of trees and plants of that country, rich

in flora, was simply marvelous. Not less great was his knowledge of men, of the many races they represented; and it was seldom we met any one in our daily rambles, be he 'Greek or barbarian, bond or free,' of whom he could not relate some pleasing anecdote, or touch upon peculiar race or national characteristics. They all, Burman, Hindoo, Moslem, European, knew and respected him, — 'Father Bennett,' as it was the custom to call him. A most interesting thing to me was his intimacy and friendship with the Catholic bishop, Father Bigandet, like himself a veteran of fifty years' service in Burma.

"Honor for him was not confined to his own city, as I learned by going with him on a visiting expedition to Bassein, where all whom we met, foreign and native, strove to do him reverence. In the whole length and breadth of India I found, in my subsequent travels, that my relationship to him was a passport to the society of the good, among whom his name and labors were well known and venerated."

While Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were enjoying the visit of a grandson, the Lord was leading one of their granddaughters, Ruth W. Ranney, to give herself to the work of foreign missions. As soon as they heard of this they wrote, asking that she come to them, at their expense, to share their home and work. The invitation was accepted, and she returned to work in the field where her parents, as well as grandparents, had labored before her. In company with several missionaries she reached Rangoon January 5, 1885. On that Monday morning, driving through the city with Mr. Bennett, to the

Ah! home, many objects of interest were passed, all of which were faithfully pointed out to her. As the large white gate-posts at the entrance to the home compound came in sight down the street, Mr. Bennett called her attention, saying, "There, that is the gate of Eden." She was met at the foot of the stairs by Mrs. Bennett, and sent to her room to read the mail awaiting her, while the meeting of the Bible women, which had been interrupted a moment, was continued. At the close of the meeting, two of these women, Mah Hnin Yā and Mah Sāt, who had cared for her as a child in Moulmein, rejoiced to bid her welcome to the land of her birth.

At this time Mrs. Bennett had three regular weekly meetings; one with her Bible women on Monday; the church women's meeting on Wednesday; and on Saturday a class of college boys whom she helped in preparing the Sunday-school lesson for the Sabbath. Many of these boys she supported in school, and to-day a goodly number bless her for enabling them to obtain a christian education, which has, by God's blessing, made them useful members of society, and in some cases mission workers.

The first six months of 1885 sped by with much of peace and satisfaction to the little family. Mrs. Bennett felt at rest when her husband attended the evening meetings, because he had a companion, while she herself enjoyed many pleasant hours in listening to reading, in assisting the newcomer in the study of the language, or in showing her the varied lines of work in which she wished her to engage. In the twilight, when the poor

eyes did not need to be shielded from the glare, she never tired of hearing how people lived in America, and she came to realize through these talks, as never before, that in her short visits home she had not comprehended the great changes in habits of life and thought since the time when people traveled by stage coach and canal boat ; when the young people were silent in the churches, and when women did not venture to lift their voices before the brethren.

Mr. Bennett's last outing was a visit of a few days with long valued friends, Mrs. Ingalls and Miss Evans, at Thonze. In July he was stricken with the illness from which he never recovered. The all-absorbing topic of this year was the anticipated taking of Upper Burma by the English, a subject which was often discussed by Mr. and Mrs. Bennett. During those days of weariness and suffering Mr. Bennett thought more about the latest news from Mandalay and the frontier than about any other topic, and to within a few days of his death insisted on seeing the latest war news in the daily paper. In October occurred the dedication of the new house of worship, erected by the English Baptist Church of Rangoon. To this event Mr. Bennett had long looked forward, and had especially desired to be present at the Sunday-school service to be held in the morning ; but when the appointed day arrived he was too ill to attend. From this time he steadily failed, and on the morning of November 16, 1885, at the ripe age of eighty-one years and nearly nine months, he quietly, peacefully "fell asleep in Jesus."

“How blest the righteous when he dies !
When sinks a weary soul to rest !
How mildly beam the closing eyes !
How gently heaves the expiring breast !
So fades a summer cloud away ;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er ;
So gently shuts the eye of day ;
So dies a wave along the shore.
Life's labor done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies,
While heaven and earth combine to say,
‘How blest the righteous when he dies !’”

Of the last weeks of his life Mrs. Bennett wrote to a daughter :—

“He rallied considerably in October, but I knew his strength was weakness. I watched him day and night with the knowledge he was most liable to a relapse at any time, and I felt that when that came he would go down very rapidly. Strangely anxious he was to live, after the near vision of heaven he had in August. He felt he was to live to do something more for the great work which he saw opening as the result of the coming war, and he would frequently refer to it in so positive a way that it made my heart sink within me. We never tried to discourage him in any way, only to keep him from reading too much. His appetite did not become normal after the first week of his illness, and he never came to the table to eat with us, except for eight or ten days just before the relapse the third week in October. . . . I can not tell you what a comfort it is now to think that in all these days dear Ruth and I, helped a part of the time by Mah Thein Kin [a Burman girl, an assistant in the family], had the strength to do everything for him, as I was on the point of breaking down in August when his illness began.”

On his last night on earth Mr. Cross watched beside him, and when all was over, Dr. Stevens, who had been called at the last, committed the bereaved wife to the Father's tender care, as only he could who had been for many years the trusted co-worker of these servants

of the Lord. It all seems so sudden and hurried in that land! The last farewells, the hasty preparations on one day, and the putting out of sight of the loved form on the next! The house was thronged with Europeans and natives until four o'clock, when the funeral services were held there in his last earthly home, the circle of younger missionaries sorrowing as for a father, while to the Stevenses and Braytons, so long associated with him, it was the calling home of a brother. The services were conducted in English and Burmese, the girls of the Kemendine school and the college boys being present. Perhaps the most touching incident in the service was the caressing of the placid face by the little Sunday-school children who had loved him in life.

As the procession took its way through the city to the place of burial, many business men joined it to do honor to one whom all had respected. "Devout men carried him to his burial," men of various races and religions, but united now by a common bond. He was laid to rest near the graves of his friends Drs. Mason and Wade, Messrs. Hancock and Goodell, and Mrs. Binney, — a goodly company! Not many months after, one who that day stood by the open grave, Dr. Stevens, was also called home, and his last resting place is in the same hallowed spot. Surely heaven is nearer and dearer to many a one for the presence in glory of these loved saints of the Lord!

Leading papers, both in India and America, gave more or less extended notices of Mr. Bennett's life and labors. We quote from the *Rangoon Times*: —

"The religious public will be especially interested in Mr. Bennett's life, as another testimony in favor of foreign missions. With good business prospects at home, at the age of twenty-four he devoted himself to this work from the one conviction, which increased with his years, that the gospel of Christ is the only hope of the heathen world. Not that he thought that the heathen would be condemned for not believing on him of whom they had never heard, but that, being already condemned according to their own confession for doing what they themselves know to be wrong, and knowing no way of forgiveness or escape from future punishment, they needed to be told of that 'one name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' With this conviction, and in obedience to the last command of Christ, he devoted himself to that work, that by means of the living voice and of the printed page the knowledge of the Saviour might be diffused as extensively as possible among the many races of this country. And he was not disappointed, but constantly encouraged his associates by speaking of the great changes which God in his providence and by his spirit had already accomplished under his own observation; and truly he could say, 'What hath God wrought!' In his own time 'the little one had become,' not 'a thousand' only, but tens of thousands. No wonder then that, with ample means to enable him to return home and live comfortably among his numerous relations and friends, he preferred to remain here and die at his post, seeking to promote this good work."

No need to speak of the empty hands, the empty house, and the weary, aching heart of the desolate wife, who would so gladly have followed after, but who was left to toil on "till the shadows were a little longer grown." The excitement and care of the five months of her husband's illness had so told on her, that heart trouble appeared, causing her friends some alarm. She was advised by her physician to go away for a complete change of air and scene; so Christmas found her with Miss Watson in Bassein, in the pleasant home of Mr. and Mrs. Nichols, where the renewal of old friendships among the Karens, and the seeing of familiar faces,

English and Burmese, revived her spirits. In January she returned to her home.

The following year was one of great weakness ; but the coming of her daughter and husband from England, and their presence, while they relieved her from all business cares for a year, was a great comfort to her. During these days of weariness and prostration the doctor would sometimes say, " If only the natives could be kept away, and she could have more quiet, she would improve." But when this was suggested she protested that while she was spared they must be allowed to come to see her as much as they pleased. And to the close of her life she received all who came, and few indeed were those who went away without the aid they sought. Mrs. Stevens, who during these later years spent many evenings with her in the darkened room, says of her :—

" Her sympathetic heart felt the many burdens, cares, sorrows, and pains, which had been poured into her ears during the day just closing. She had assisted, advised, or warned the many of varied races and classes who had been visiting her, or to whom her carriage had taken her in the cool of the morning, as she thus sought refreshment for her weakened and weary body. I almost always found her with a load of heartaches and anxieties. The inquirer, the wandering disciple, the deceiver, the hopeful case, the weak, and the bereaved were her themes ; very rarely any personal anxiety. And yet how much she might have told, for her life was one of much pain and sorrow. It was wonderful that she could accomplish so much work when feeling the effects of such severe illnesses and accidents as she had repeatedly

met with. Her physical constitution was of high enduring strength, corresponding with the vigor of her intellect, her heart, and her purpose. Her large, tall frame, her fine face, with its full forehead, beautiful eyes, and lovely smile, well served and adorned a nature and life such as hers."

In 1886 Mrs. Leavitt visited Burma in the interests of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and Mrs. Bennett counted it a privilege to entertain this devoted worker who, in the later years of her life, had dared danger and endured much of suffering to advance the cause of temperance and purity. From the formation of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Mrs. Bennett had felt keen interest in and sympathy with its aims, and she and her husband had counted the *Union Signal* as one of the choice weekly visitors from the home land. Both had rejoiced in the nobler ideals and higher aims, the broader outlook and wider sphere of usefulness of the women of America in these later days. Mrs. Bennett was made an honorary Vice-President of the Rangoon Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and always seconded its interests in all possible ways.

CHAPTER XI.

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

“I am so weak, dear Lord,
I can not stand one moment without thee.
But oh! the tenderness of thine enfolding!
And oh! the faithfulness of thine upholding!
And oh! the strength of thy right hand!
That strength is enough for me!”

MRS. BENNETT’S interest in the work of Bible women and of schools was not affected either by the death of her husband or by her own feebleness, but continued unabated, leading her to devote her time, strength, and means to those interests so long as she lived. Hence this sketch would be incomplete without some more extended notice of the Burman Bible women who were her life-long helpers in the work; and of the schools, organized and wholly or in part sustained by her, and often provided with buildings by Mr. Bennett.

Concerning the first Burman Bible woman Mrs. Bennett wrote in 1877:—

“Mah Lee was one of the thirty-two who were church members when we arrived in Moulmein. When I became able to talk a little in Burmese, I asked her how she came to be a christian. She said she and her husband had heard something of the new religion from a few of the earlier christians who came from Rangoon at the close of the first war in 1826.



MAH HNIN YA.

Afterwards when dear Mrs. Wade went to Moulmein she heard her talk of the eternal God till she became greatly troubled. Mrs. Wade told her she must pray for light; she said she did not know how to pray to an invisible God. But one night before going to sleep she felt she must pray, and began, 'O thou eternal God! if thou art the true God, teach me how to pray to thee.' From this time light did come, and she was a loving, faithful disciple until the end of her long life. The good she did still follows her."

In regard to another, Mrs. Bennett wrote in the *News* of October, 1890:—

"On August 14 one of the first, warmest, and oldest friends I ever had in Burma 'fell asleep in Jesus.' Mah Hnin Yā, long known by Burman missionaries, was one of eight young girls whom Mrs. Wade, of precious memory, had in a small boarding school when we arrived in January, 1830. Three of these girls were married, and the remainder followed their example in the course of that year. Mah Hnin Yā was then fifteen years old, and was married to Ko En, a man of considerable scholarship, who was employed many years as an assistant to Dr. Judson in translating and revising the Bible.

"From the day we arrived Mah Hnin Yā became my assistant in caring for my two-and-a-half months old baby, and taught me to read and speak the Burmese language. She was the mother of seven daughters, six of whom grew up and were married; two only survive her. In after years when her husband was ordained and became the pastor of the first church in Rangoon, after the war of 1852, she became a good pastor's wife, hospitable, kind, and efficient. After her husband's death, about twenty-five years ago, she became a Bible woman. Another old widow from Prome, Ā Wah, was associated with her, and they went the length and breadth of the town and suburbs many times in the year. Through their efforts also many converts were made in Daubong and Syriam. Their only mode of traveling was by foot, or by small native boats, and they were often very weary, but they showed great zeal. I used to admire the warm, affectionate sympathy manifested when talking with their listeners, and coveted the ability to speak as they did.

"Dear old Ā Wah died more than twelve years ago, when another widow, Mah Sāt, came from Moulmein and joined Mah Hnin Yā in Bible work. They had been in school together, and were baptized and married

about the same time. They had worked faithfully side by side till about five months ago, when Mah Hnin Yā was laid aside by illness. Mah Sāt is still left with us, but is feeble, and feels her loss keenly. She can not go far from home, but always delights in reading the Bible, and is always careful to use every opportunity to talk to christians and to heathen of the necessity of being prepared for the great change that awaits them. She is especially happy in telling Bible stories to the young boys and girls that come and go, and they seem equally happy in listening to her."

During these later years Mah Sāt's heart had been led to rejoice in the Lord's wonderful goodness in calling her to be his own ; his long-suffering in bearing with her many wanderings, and his special favor in allowing her to spend her last years in direct service for him. One day in the woman's prayer meeting, after Mrs. Bennett had led in a prayer in which she seemed oblivious to her surroundings as she poured out her desires for the land and the people of her choice, she turned to the sisters grouped about her, and said, "Let us have an experience meeting." Mah Sāt, who sat next her, began by relating some of the dealings of the Lord with her ; others followed, and the season was a very precious one to all. The next morning right after breakfast she came in leaning on her long staff, her face beaming with pleasure as she greeted us with, "You remember the meeting yesterday? Well, I couldn't sleep all night for praising, and I've come up this morning to have you praise God with me." She is old and feeble, and waits with longing heart to follow the loved ones gone before.

Belonging to the old Tavoy life, and depending much on the counsel of Mrs. Bennett, was Mah Hnin-ey. Both spiritually and financially she was through long



MAH SÄT.

years of christian life a pillar to the little church in Tavoy. At the time of her birth, and during her childhood, her parents were heathen. Her father, MOUNG MYÄT LAY, took part in the rebellion which occurred in Tavoy in 1829, when Mrs. Boardman and her son George were in great danger and took refuge in a godown on the river bank. MOUNG MYÄT LAY and other insurgents were captured and imprisoned in Amherst. While in prison he for the first time heard of the eternal God. After two years he was released for good conduct, and returned to Tavoy. There he learned the way more perfectly, but was not baptized till 1844, by Dr. Mason. He subsequently became pastor of the church there, which position he filled till his death.

Mah Hnin-ey was sent to Moulmein to school, and made good use of her advantages, becoming a bright, intelligent woman. In her eighteenth year she was converted and baptized by Dr. Judson, and was afterwards married to a preacher who did good service in Tavoy and Mergui, dying many years ago. Having been brought up in poverty, and early left a widow, she learned lessons of industry and economy that enabled her to accumulate quite a little property, and she never forgot to give regularly and systematically to the Lord. She brought up her son and daughter, and also a niece; the latter at her death left enough money to build the pleasant Burman chapel in Tavoy, and also gave a valuable piece of property to be used for mission purposes. Mah Hnin-ey divided her property in equal parts between her daughter, her son's children, and the cause

of Christ. The \$1,000 for the Lord was given towards the Judson Memorial Chapel in Mandalay during her lifetime.

Mrs. Bennett had for years under her direction two Bible women, one a Tamil and the other a Telugu, she conversing with them in English when they came to give their reports ; but in the prayers that always followed each used the language in which she was born. The Tamil and Telugu Church ever looked to her as a true friend and adviser in every important matter. She was as familiar with the members of this church and their interests as she was with those of the Burman Church, and she lived to see this small band of christians grow into a large and independent church, much of whose success was due to her wise advice and fostering care, which were sought and gratefully received.

During the rains of 1888 a daily Bible-class for the instruction of Burman women was opened in Mrs. Bennett's house by her granddaughter. The number in attendance increased from three in the first term to twelve in the third. Women who when they entered were unable to read intelligently, and who were wholly ignorant of how to study themselves, or to teach others, learned, with other valuable lessons, to read, write, and sing ; some afterwards becoming efficient helpers in various parts of Burma. At the time this class was begun Mrs. Bennett furnished means to open a class for young men in charge of Dr. Rose, and this has grown in numbers and efficiency from year to year, its necessity and importance being more and more felt, until at the convention held in Henzada, November,

1891, steps were taken to establish a school for Burman preachers and Bible women upon a firm basis. Several young men whom the Lord seemed to call and fit for evangelistic service, were aided during these years by Mrs. Bennett to go about in the Rangoon district, in those months when they were able to leave the cultivation of their rice fields. Others were furnished with books and tracts, and encouraged to work along the line of the railroad, though without receiving a stated salary.

In regard to her, Rev. E. O. Stevens has written :—

“She was emphatically a benefactress to needy boys and girls in our mission schools, and a patroness of sacred learning, constantly seeking for opportunities for increasing the efficiency of the native ministry. But it was not the amount of aid rendered to those in want which was noteworthy, so much as the way in which it was rendered. Her life was characterized by the essence of true politeness, — kindness, kindly expressed. Her faults were those of a great, loving, motherly heart, willing to run the risk of being imposed upon by the improvidence, shiftlessness, or ingratitude of those who applied to her for assistance. Her deeds of charity were performed without show or ostentation.

“Possessed of a superior mind, she never paraded her acquaintance with what was best in English and Burmese literature. Her bearing was dignified, but her manner was always affable. High attainments in the divine life never made her piety obtrusive. As she grew old her mind did not seem to be too much taken up with the infirmities of age. A noble past did not so fill her vision as to prevent her from being intensely interested in all that was going on in the present. To the last the grace of God so shone forth in her daily walk and conversation, as to make her ever hopeful and active in plans and purposes for the evangelization of Burma. ‘She hath been a succorer of many, and of me also.’”

On the turning of a few families from heathenism, or the organization of a new church in a village, the ques-

tion of a school for the children immediately arises. The priests' schools, where Buddhist books are used, and all the influence is toward heathenism, are manifestly not fit places for the children of christians ; yet unless a mission school is established there is no alternative for them but ignorance. The people are often too poor to help much in the matter, and Mrs. Bennett took keen delight in assisting to establish such schools, at one time having eight of them under her care, two within the limits of Rangoon, and the others in jungle villages not far distant. For some years two schools were kept up near Pegu, before a missionary was stationed there. In the church and school at Mingaladôn she took an especial interest, the chapel being a gift from Mr. Bennett. The work was in charge of Moungh Yawba, a grandson of one of the earliest christians in Tavoy, who labored faithfully, largely supporting himself, until his death a few years since. His wife, educated at the Kemendine Girls' School, was of great use in the work, not only in teaching the school, but in laboring among the heathen and christian women. She was the first Burman christian to follow Mrs. Bennett through the valley of death, and how joyful must have been their meeting on the other side !

The successor of Moungh Yawba as pastor of the Mingaladôn Church is a young man full of zeal, and blessed in his efforts for the conversion of the heathen. Mrs. Bennett could have said of him, " He is my son in the gospel."

Mr. Bennett enjoyed the privilege of baptizing a number of converts in Syriam, and later assisted the

church there to build a chapel. The christians from this place were in the habit of coming to Mrs. Bennett for counsel and sympathy so long as she lived.

The Woman's Society has for some time aided a school in Pantanaw, where a large number of pupils, most of whom are the children of heathen, gain in day and Sabbath school a knowledge of Christ and his Word that they could obtain in no other way. For the accommodation of this school Mr. Bennett built a house, and when a fire swept through that part of the town and destroyed it, Mrs. Bennett, feeling that the work must not stop, immediately put up another.

In the Seventh Annual Report of the W. B. F. M. S. we find the following account of the beginning of the now well-known Kemendine Girls' School :—

“In October, 1870, I went by the invitation of Dr. Stevens and Mrs. Bennett to take the charge of two day-schools, one at Lanmadau and the other at Kemendine, during the absence of Mrs. Bennett in this country. The school at Lanmadau was for boys, the one at Kemendine a mixed school of small children, taught by the daughter of the native preacher. A small teak house had been built there, and was occupied by the family of the preacher, the lower part being used as a school-room. There was one girl of fifteen boarding in this family, supported by Mrs. Bennett. She was from a heathen family, but had embraced christianity, and gave great promise of usefulness. A few months after I went there she was bitten by a poisonous snake, and died in a few hours, expressing with her last words her faith and trust in Christ. When I saw the blessing which had come to her from living in this christian family, I felt anxious to find some other girls to whom I could give the same advantages. . . . When Mrs. Bennett returned in November there were nine girls under my care, boarding in the family of the native preacher. I then desired to live where I could exercise a more constant care over them, and the Woman's Society responded to that wish by the erection of our dwelling house in May, 1873.

"In May, 1874, the boarding department of the school dissolved its connection with the day-school, and was temporarily removed to the house formerly occupied by Dr. Stevens. We then refused to receive any pupils unless they were legally bound to us for a term of years. In June, 1875, our new school building was dedicated. About forty have been baptized who were connected with the school; about one-half of the girls have been from heathen families, and the conversions have been in about that proportion, as many from heathen as from christian families."

The buying of the land and the erection of the new building referred to was made possible by Mr. Bennett's generous donation, and both he and Mrs. Bennett supported in every possible way the ladies in charge of the school. This has grown steadily in efficiency, and is now in care of Miss McAllister and Miss Williams. After the change of location had been made, Mrs. Bennett to the time of her death continued the day-school at the old place, at her own expense, erecting a new house for the preacher when the old one was destroyed by fire.

CHAPTER XII.

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"No shadows yonder, — all light and song;
Each day I wonder and say, How long
Shall time me sunder from that dear throng?
No weeping yonder, — all fled away!
While here I wander each weary day,
And sigh as I ponder my long, long stay.
No partings yonder, — time and space never
Again shall sunder, — hearts can not sever, —
Dearer and fonder, hands clasp forever."

THE missionaries celebrated Mrs. Bennett's eightieth birthday on January 13, 1888, by gathering at her home for a season of prayer and praise. Mr. Brayton and Rev. Thomas Evans of Mussoori (for a short time in charge of the English Baptist Church in Rangoon), with fitly chosen words added much to the interest of the occasion.

The fortnightly prayer meetings held by the missionaries were almost the only opportunities for social worship enjoyed by Mrs. Bennett in these closing years of her life. Rangoon missionaries have the pleasure of welcoming all the new workers on their arrival, and speeding all the weary, disabled ones as they depart for a rest in the home land. So this aged "mother of us all," in gladly taking her turn at entertaining the prayer

circle, kept in touch with the christian experience and work of her co-laborers, not only in Rangoon, but in all the stations of Burma.

The visit of Dr. Ashmore, and later of Dr. Mabie, and the opportunity to discuss with them questions of mission policy, was a great pleasure to her. Nor were these the only ones, for since Burma has been included by many travelers in their round-the-world trips, many of those interested in missions have sought out this veteran worker among the Burmese; and thus as she sat in her quiet study, where she daily received numbers of natives, she had also the privilege from time to time of talking with representatives from far-away America, England, and Australia, on the subject nearest her heart. When the Fisk Jubilee Singers charmed the little Rangoon world with their quaint music, Mrs. Bennett was able to be present at the song service held in the college, and to enjoy with others the novel experience of hearing negro, Karen, and Burman in turn sing the songs of Zion, making melody unto the Lord, each in his own tongue, the natives pleasing the visitors as much as they were pleased by them.

The hot season of 1889 was spent in company with other missionaries under the hospitable roof of Miss Susie Haswell, at Amherst. The two months so dreaded for her passed rapidly, and without producing undue weakness, and the daily drive, the evening sea-breeze, and the pleasant companionship proved beneficial to her. Her room, which was quite apart from the bustle of the household, became a retreat for quiet reading and general Bible study. On her return home she spent a

Sabbath with Rev. E. O. Stevens and wife in Moulmein, seeing for the last time many of the old familiar scenes and faces.

Much of the time these last years she suffered from sleeplessness, and the long night-watches were spent in prayer, often naming brothers and sisters, children and children's children, to the third generation. Again the native preachers, teachers, and Bible women and their needs would form the burden of her petitions. Or when some case of discipline, or need of deciding some important matter, was filling her thoughts, in the quiet and seclusion which seems in that country only found in the solitude of the night, she would, unhindered, roll the care upon her Lord, and gain from him the strength and guidance he so freely promises. As she once said to a loved brother, she "lived upon prayer." She dwelt much, too, on the Word of God, texts which were especially helpful to her, or which had been sent as Christmas tokens, being often on her lips, and oftener comforting her heart. "I will watch to see what he will say unto me," she said in the last days before the departure of her granddaughter, when fear of separation and the weakness of both made the daily cares hard to bear. The little tract, "Jack, the Huckster," was sent by one of her daughters; and the simple couplet —

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all in all,"

so exactly expressed the sentiment of her heart, that she often spoke of it to those she met. Few knew the depth of her feeling and conviction; so strong was her

sense of personal guilt and unworthiness, that she was often overwhelmed by it, and only in the later years of her life did she come out into the sunlight of perfect assurance of acceptance with God; and even in these years spiritual struggles and conquests were not unknown, as she sometimes remarked in the morning that she "had an encounter with the devil last night." When she thought of the terrors of eternal punishment, and the mass of people about her without God and without hope, her heart seemed filled with unutterable, tender longing for the salvation of the lost; and this was the key to her life of unselfish devotion. Truly the Lord loved the lost through her, and she yielded herself to him that he might find in her an instrument ready to his hand. While often expressing a desire to live for the sake of her "native children," through whose prayers she felt life was still granted her, that she like a nurse might cherish, or like a father exhort and encourage them, she still longed greatly to depart and be with Christ. In the burden and heat of the day, when heart and flesh almost failed, she would exclaim, "I shall be so glad when I get an honorable discharge!"

Mrs. Brayton's death in December of 1890 brought the other world very near, giving her some glimpses into the bright beyond, as she sat by the bedside of this saintly sister, so loved and so long associated with her in the Master's work. No one privileged to see Mrs. Brayton in those days can ever lose the impression of her look and tone as she lingered on the brink of the river, already more in heaven than on earth, her eyes brightening with the glow of the coming glory and the

inheritance just in view, and yet always ready with a loving, personal word, often in Scriptural language, for each one who came to see her, rich and poor, high and low ; the natives for whom she had prayed and planned so long, and the members of the mission circle, beloved in the Lord.

At this time Mrs. Bennett's granddaughter went to Madras, hoping to find help and refreshment there which should make an immediate return to America unnecessary. Returning after several weeks' absence with failing strength, the question of separation had to be faced, but the Lord in his mercy prepared each for his plan concerning her. When the last of March, the time for sailing, came, it was decided that if the way opened she was to return to Burma, after a few months' rest in England, in the home of her aunt, with her mother, who came from America to meet her there. But health was not sufficiently regained to carry out this plan, and, a visit to America seeming necessary, in September she reluctantly turned her face homeward.

In the months following her departure the missionaries were very thoughtful of Mrs. Bennett's comfort ; other homes were gladly thrown open to her, but she felt she could not give up her own, and with Mah Thain Kin, who understood her habits perfectly, she lived on in the old home, made sacred by so many precious memories. Before the rains set in, however, she spent a month with Mrs. McCall, a Scotch lady, who loved her as a daughter, and with her husband had been for years as desirous for her welfare as members of her own family could be.

Again in September she went to them for a little change and refreshment. On the morning of the 24th she took her usual drive, going to the Guest House to see one of the missionaries lying ill there, and then to see one of the Burman teachers, who was laid aside with fever. In the dampness of the morning she overtaxed her strength, and the prevailing influenza seized upon her. But a few days previous to this the news of her granddaughter's enforced return to America had come from England, and with straining eyes and trembling hand she had written her a twelve-page letter in regard to the work and workers, fearing, as she said, that she should never see her to tell her, and doubting that she should ever write to her again. From the first of her illness she felt it would be a serious attack, and in her sufferings the one desire of her heart was shown by the oft-murmured prayer, "O Lord, don't pass me by *this* time!" When able she spoke of the interests of the work with those who called, but oftener made the one request that they would pray only that the Master would call her home. Two days before her desire was granted Dr. Rose came in to pray with her, and on his saying, "You are driving over a rough road, but the Lord holds the reins, and he is making the way smooth for you," she earnestly responded, "Yes, yes!" A sleepless night, another weary, restless day, and the next morning, the last day of September, 1891, she peacefully passed

"Beyond the smiling and the weeping,
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping.
Love, rest, and home, sweet, sweet home."

In death her face had a lovely, restful expression ; the look of care was gone, and even age seemed to relax its grasp, so that she appeared much as she did ten years before.

At seven o'clock the next morning the friends gathered at the house ; the hymn, "I heard the voice of Jesus say," was sung, and prayer offered by the Rev. Dr. Cross of Toungu, for years her neighbor in Tavoy. The body was then removed to the English Baptist Church, which was filled, in spite of a heavy storm. As the coffin was borne in by six young missionary brethren, the choir sang softly an appropriate hymn. Many flowers, mostly beautiful white lilies, were sent by the girls of Kemendine School, the *employés* of the Mission Press, and others. Rev. Mr. Whitman read the Scriptures ; "Asleep in Jesus" was sung by the congregation, followed by an address by Rev. Dr. Rose, and prayer by Mr. Brayton, the senior missionary. When an opportunity was given, nearly every one in the church came forward for a last look at the sweet face, many of the natives weeping as for the loss of a mother ; and such had she truly been to them. The body was then borne to the Baptist cemetery, and laid beside that of her husband, in "the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection." At the grave the services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Cushing, and prayer offered by Rev. Dr. Smith ; representatives of many races and all classes of the community by their presence silently testifying to the worth of the departed.

A memorial service was held the following Sunday in the Baptist Church, Dr. Rose and Dr. Cushing each

telling something of her life and character, and the good wrought by her, for the inspiration and comfort of the large circle of friends who are left to mourn her. On the next Sunday morning a similar service in Burmese was held in the Lanmadau Chapel. An address was given by Dr. Rose, founded on Rev. iv. 13; the pastor of the church and four of the native preachers, two of them aged workers, took part in the services; among other hymns Mrs. Bennett's favorite, "In the christian's home in glory," was sung.

With a life dominated by such a spirit, fruitful in such varied service, so sympathetic with, and so helpful to, the diverse needs of humanity about her, it is not wonderful that she had such a strong hold on the respect and love of so many people of all ranks in Burma, in England, and in America.

Painters depict their saints with aureoles of delicate celestial light, but our minds will always recall dear Mrs. Bennett's completed life as transfigured by the glory of the Christ who dwelt in her and wrought through her. Such is the benediction left to us; for "the memory of the just is blessed."

"Blessing she was: God made her so;
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fell from her noiseless as the snow,
Nor did she ever chance to know
That aught were easier than to bless."





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